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## NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE Government have had a bad week, and next week promises to be worse. A crisis, partly internal and partly caused by circumstance, is upon them; the Labour ship is menaced by mutiny within and the mounting seas of unemployment without. Mr. Lloyd George offers to act as Liberal pilot and salve the musty cargo of phrases, promises, and phylacteries; but his terms are understood to be too high—nothing less than another franchise revolution.

Labour is therefore in the depths of gloom. The stokers from the Clyde are, as usual, on strike, and the ordinary deck-hands, who hoped for a better voyage, are recalling gloomily what one of the Labour lights said during the similar crisis of 1924: "Only one man wants an election, but that one happens to be Prime Minister, and MacDonald is sick of the whole thing." History

does not always repeat itself, but the situation does not seem essentially different to-day.

Sir Oswald Mosley's resignation is probably not a great loss to the Government, for he is distrusted as a convert by the old guard, and not altogether popular with the new. But his going is the first open confession of the rift within the lute, and after the rejection of his memorandum on unemployment, he could do little else than quit. He will be more important outside the Ministry than within.

So far as the actual details of his unemployment proposals are known, some of them were impracticable or merely unwise methods of public relief which were bound to be turned down. But some of his suggestions belonged to that debatable region of long-distance constructive work which is (a) nationally useful and (b) outside the scope of ordinary business; and these should have received more sympathetic consideration from a

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Government which is not averse to State enterprise and which is hardly above taking a leaf out of Mr. Lloyd George's famous book.

But the Government, which came in on unemployment, has only succeeded in making things worse. Mr. Thomas has certainly made many speeches. But fine words butter no parsnips. Mr. Snowden has made fewer speeches, but he has successfully obstructed any remedial plans, and his pet prejudices have created more unemployment than Mr. Thomas has cured. Socialism, like Free Trade, means impotence in our time.

It is quite useless to blame the world slump and the Hatry crash. These things are contributory causes, and they could have been pleaded as an excuse had the unemployment figures remained as they were a year ago. But the plain fact is that the unemployment figures began to go up before the Hatry crash, and they have increased steadily ever since. It is one thing for a doctor to admit that a disease which he promises to cure is incurable. It is quite another thing for him to make it worse. Sir Oswald Mosley is well out of it.

Meanwhile, secret negotiations between the Liberal remnant and Labour have been going on behind the scenes—the usual long accounts are appearing in the newspapers—not on unemployment at all, but on the franchise. It is a little reminiscent of fiddling while Rome burns, but let that pass. Mr. Lloyd George wants Proportional Representation. Mr. MacDonald will not concede it. Mr. MacDonald might consider the Alternative Vote, because he believes the House of Lords would reject it, and the Liberals would then have to keep the Government in for two years through thick and thin, until the Parliament Act gave them what they wanted.

From the Liberal point of view, the remedy seems worse than the disease. So long as the Liberals can put up the pretence that they are only supporting the Government when its policy coincides with their own, but that they vote against it whenever the sacred principles of Liberalism are affronted, they have some sort of case in the constituencies, and they may save a few seats next time. But once they have struck the bargain, they are in the position of the man who pawns his waistcoat to buy a shirt; you cannot get the waistcoat back, and the shirt soon looks the worse for wear.

If a compact of that kind were made, the electorate would simply regard the Liberal Party as a poor relation of Labour, and prefer to do business with the genuine Socialist rather than with the man who swears he is independent and only drops out of a hole in the Labour pocket at a General Election. An independent opposition might make itself respectable and respected, but an opposition that merely sang for its supper would end in the street.

Mr. Buxton has invited all three parties to unite with him in devising an agricultural policy. The plain meaning of this is that the Government's agricultural policy—guarantees, quotas, compul-

sory milling of British wheat, and the rest—has broken down. They feel that something ought to be done, they know what ought to be done, but they cannot bring themselves to say the word Protection.

The blunt, unpalatable truth is that unless agriculture is protected it will die, but with eight voters out of ten living in towns, no Government dare expose itself to Mr. Lloyd George's taunts about offals. Everybody knows it, everybody admits it, yet everybody puts forward the same footling little remedies, and pretends to call them a solution, simply because the Liberals keep the little loaf in a back cupboard as their last chance of political salvation. Mr. Buxton knows what ought to be done. But I doubt if he has the force or the driving power to do it.

The Conservative Opposition, which has shown natural signs of restiveness at the flabbiness of its leaders, staged a minor revolt early in the week, and indicated its desire to debate the Naval Agreement. One cannot help sympathizing with the cause, and if it had been a matter of domestic politics, the activists would have had wide support in the country. But on a problem of high policy, in which the full facts are not yet available, there is in fact a case for delay, and the recalcitrants were wise in agreeing with their leaders.

I am glad to see that Lord Beaverbrook has dropped the referendum. It was, as the SATURDAY REVIEW pointed out on April 5, the weak point in his platform, both on constitutional and practical grounds, and it could hardly survive the exhaustive analysis of its history by Mr. Richard Jebb in the current *Nineteenth Century*. It was a hasty half-thought in the Baldwin-Beaverbrook negotiations early in March, but it confused the issue, and it is now well out of the way.

The fact is that in this country you either mean a thing or you don't. The electorate understands one bite at a cherry, but not two, and there is much to be said for this amiable simplicity of outlook. The shareholders in the concern elect the directors, but they expect the board to carry on the business without asking for instructions. The referendum is really abnegation of leadership, and what this country wants is more rather than less leadership.

M. Briand's proposals for a European federation have at last taken shape, that is to say, "if shape it be which shape has none," as Brougham remarked of the Prince Regent, for they are nebulous in the extreme. Nevertheless, as I pointed out last week, the present Government and its Liberal allies may find a use for them as a stick with which to belabour Empire Free Trade, and for that reason alone I regard them with a good deal of apprehension.

Stripped of all the superfluous verbiage which is so dear to the French Foreign Minister, the scheme is neither more nor less than the old attempt to stabilize the *status quo* by a series of security pacts, which, in one form or another,

has been the aim of French diplomacy for the past twelve years. The only difference between the present plan and its predecessors is that on this occasion M. Briand has cloaked his designs with a vague sentimentalism—presumably the better to entrap the guileless Mr. Henderson.

So far as the overwhelming majority of people in this country is concerned, the Locarno Pact represents the *terminus ad quem* of our Continental commitments and not the *terminus a quo*, and the sooner the Quai d'Orsay realizes this fact the better. Public opinion is unalterably opposed to membership of any European federation, and if the present Government flirts with the French proposals it will meet with a defeat beside which that of six years ago was merely a slight reverse.

Signor Mussolini's candour is at least refreshing after M. Briand's pseudo-idealism. It is true that his tone was rather unnecessarily provocative, but as his remarks were quite obviously intended for French, not British, consumption, there is no need for our fellow-countrymen to take offence. What he said of the condition of Europe was a great deal nearer the truth than the conceptions of the French statesmen, and I for one cannot help admiring a realist, however unpalatable his realism may be.

Moreover, it is a great mistake to suppose, as a section of the British Press affects to do, that the *Duce* does not mean what he says. We committed that error in respect of the Germans during the early years of the present century, and with disastrous consequences. The Italian threat does not, of course, primarily concern this country, but that is no reason why we should shut our eyes to the growing Franco-Italian enmity by taking it for granted that Signor Mussolini always talks through his hat.

British schoolmasters back from a trip through Canada have been seized with an idea not of their own conception. They suggest that British boys, looking to careers overseas, should complete their education of a Canadian university—an excellent way of bringing youth into proper relationship with the psychology and conditions of the Dominion. But there is a side to the question the schoolmasters overlook. Boys educated at Canadian universities are snapped up by the United States, where larger emoluments are offered than Canada can afford. Irony, not Empire, would be served if British boys were caught in the same toils.

It was reserved for the thirteenth year after the ending of the war to end Prussianism for the coping stone to be placed on D.O.R.A. Last week the House of Commons endorsed the third reading of a Bill under which it will from next year be an offence against the law of the land to be shaved in a barber's shop on Sunday. True, a hotel guest may patronize the barber's shop on the premises, although local residents must not, and Sabbatical shaving is also licit if the client assure himself that the razor is wielded by a Jew. Presumably, adult males not addicted to the safety razor will be under the necessity of

cross-examining their barbers to elicit the artist's racial history.

A nice question arises over the decision of a United States Court against the Cunard Company, which refused (on the advice of its doctor) to carry an expectant mother across the Atlantic on the ground of danger to her health. Precisely what damage her child incurred, beyond the fact that he cannot be President, by being born in London instead of New York it is difficult to see—the Court awarded £1,700, which is quite a useful insurance policy to start life with—but the affair does seem rather to complicate the business of transport.

A steamship company, like a railway company, is a common carrier, and not entitled to discriminate between passengers it likes and does not like. On the other hand, the directors of the Cunard presumably do not lie awake o' nights if they carry one passenger more or less; and here there was obviously no question of malice, merely a medical act of supererogation on the score of possible danger to health. We can probably take it that in future there will be no more preventive medicine of this kind at the ports—it is too expensive—but when somebody dies in child-birth in an Atlantic gale it will not do to blame the company.

I suppose few people would have called Locke a great writer, but at least—unlike Conrad—he was a great story-teller, though it has always seemed to me that the weakest part of his books was the *dénouement*. The critics appear to be agreed that his best works were 'The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne' and 'The Beloved Vagabond,' an estimate which I am inclined to endorse, and the latter, in particular, showed him in his happiest vein, though one which, incidentally, he failed to recapture in later years, in spite of several efforts. He was neither high-brow nor low-brow, and his large public loved him to the last.

He once told me that his favourite author was Trollope, and in some of his books there are signs that he was making a definite attempt to follow in that master's footsteps. Locke was certainly not a great artist, but I shall not be surprised if in years to come some of his books are quoted as evidence of the life of the English upper middle-class during the first decades of the twentieth century. His characters were often poor, and the plot feeble, but the background was always faithfully drawn.

On the other hand, the obituary writers have been quite right in laying stress upon Locke's extraordinarily attractive personality. He was one of the best talkers I have ever met, and I remember some years ago in Florence, when he was there collecting material for 'The Old Bridge,' listening to him, quite enthralled, at a friend's house night after night, until a very late hour. What is not so generally known is that he was a Tory of the old school, and his one happy reminiscence of his pedagogic days was the confounding of Gladstone in an argument during one of the latter's visits to Glenalmond.



### A NEW CONSERVATIVE PROGRAMME—IV

WE have already referred to the preservation of the balance of the Constitution as one of the most important tenets of the Conservative faith, though it is, unfortunately, one that has been honoured of late years rather in the breach than the observance. Indeed, we regard the failure of the late Government to effect any reform of the House of Lords as the least satisfactory feature of its tenure of office; for although we are fully aware of the influences that were brought to bear upon Mr. Baldwin and his colleagues to take no action in the matter, once their ill-considered proposals had been withdrawn, we consider it to be the duty of the Conservative leaders to look to the historic principles of their party rather than to the conciliation of a group, however well-intentioned it may be, most of whose members are better acquainted with social than with constitutional problems. In short, the restoration of the bicameral system in this country, in fact as well as in name, is in our opinion an indispensable part of the Conservative programme.

For many centuries the balance of the Constitution was assured by the comparative equality of the four governing factors in it—the Crown, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons. If one of these showed a tendency to depress the others to any undue extent, a combination of its rivals soon made any such supremacy impossible. This system worked well until the beginning of last century, when several changes took place. First of all the Crown, for better or worse, became a figure-head after the death of William IV, while the Lords Spiritual were no longer the religious leaders of the nation, but merely the nominal heads of a Church whose adherents formed a definite minority of the whole population. Later still, the great increase in direct taxation, combined with social changes and the shift of population from the country to the towns, weakened the aristocracy as an institution, and so struck at the very basis upon which the House of Lords rested. All this, as well as the repeated extensions of the franchise and the Parliament Act of 1911, has rendered the House of Commons omnipotent in the State, and so destroyed that balance of the Constitution which was fairly well preserved down to the accession of Queen Victoria. At the same time, other forces in the national life, such as the Press and the great confederations of employers and employed, have made themselves felt, and these are, as yet, outside the Constitution altogether.

In these circumstances, it would appear that the application of a measure of rationalization is long overdue. No useful purpose can be served by attempting the restoration of a state of affairs which has long since had its day, and the repeal of the Parliament Act is not practical politics. No one who has any regard for the monarchy wishes to see it again a combatant in the political arena, the Church no longer takes its old interest in secular matters or speaks with the authority of yore, and the aristocracy has lost its power with its wealth. In effect, the balance of the Constitution can only be restored, not by putting back the clock but by securing the equipoise of the

most important social and economic forces operative at the present time.

With this end in view we should like to see the House of Lords remodelled as an elective Senate, representative of interests rather than geographical constituencies. Government to-day is tending to become increasingly more dependent upon the expert, who has hitherto been outside the Constitution, and therefore as politically irresponsible as he is scientifically powerful. If the Upper House consisted, as would be the case under such a system as that which we have in mind, almost entirely of specialists, every measure, whatever its nature, which was put before it by the Commons would be assured of examination by experts, and the danger of the passage into law of hasty and ill-considered legislation would be almost negligible. Furthermore, its prestige would be enhanced by the strengthening of its composition, for a Senate of this type could not be used by Radical and Socialist politicians as a red herring with which to draw the electorate away from the scent of their own misdeeds. As to the period for which the members of this body would sit, that would naturally not be uniform, since some of them would occupy their seats *ex officio*, while it might be convenient to have a certain number appointed by the Crown for life, or for a fixed period of years. These, however, are matters of detail, and the main point is to bring the expert within the Constitution, and so restore the balance of the latter.

On the other hand, we fail to see the necessity for increasing the powers of the Upper House, nor, unless we are greatly mistaken, is there any considerable body of opinion in the country in favour of such a step. Indeed, it seems to us that all recent projects of reform have broken down owing to the demand of their advocates for the restoration of the powers which were taken away by the Parliament Act. The increased prestige which would automatically result from the changes which we have adumbrated should be sufficient to give the necessary weight to the deliberations of the Second Chamber without the latter also possessing a final veto, while if a delay of two years is not sufficient to raise an outcry against any particular measure, then it should surely become law if democratic government is to have any meaning at all. Moreover, it is quite clear that the House of Commons, even when controlled by a Conservative majority, would never consent to the revival of the absolute veto, and those who wish to restore it are labouring in vain.

At the same time, there must clearly be some readjustment of the relations between the two Houses, and in this connexion we find it impossible to resist the conclusion that Lord Darling was working along the right lines last summer when he introduced a motion into the House of Lords authorizing ministers who were in the Commons to speak in the Second Chamber. In nearly every Parliament in the world, save our own, ministers have the right to sit and speak in either branch of the legislature, though, of course, they can only vote in that of which they are members: and it is impossible to see what serious argument can be brought against the adoption of such a procedure in this country, too. It would give the Prime Minister of the day infinitely



more latitude in the choice of his Cabinet, while it would put an end to that anomalous state of affairs which, having hardened into a convention of the Constitution since Mr. Baldwin was preferred to the late Lord Curzon, ordains that henceforth no peer shall be Premier of Great Britain. It may, indeed, be that a little more responsibility would be thrown upon individual ministers in that they would be required to pilot measures through both Houses of Parliament, but what is practicable in Paris should be equally feasible at Westminster.

We make no apology for dwelling at length upon a problem which we believe that the Conservative Party will only neglect at the peril of itself and of the nation. The Parliamentary system has broken down in many countries, partly because it no longer corresponded with their needs, and partly because a number of important factors in the national life were excluded from it. It would be idle to pretend that the present state of the British Constitution is satisfactory, and a very heavy responsibility rests upon those who may soon have it in their power to restore the equilibrium of forces within it. Neither reaction nor revolution will solve the problem, but rather a co-ordination, within the framework of the Constitution, of the national activities, economic as well as political, in the interests of the nation, and the performance of this task is peculiarly suited to those who are inspired by the principles of Conservatism.

## THE BRIDGE AND THE EXPERTS

NOW that the scheme fathered by the L.C.C. has been rejected, the Council seeks to persuade us that we are where we were before the Waterloo-Charing Cross problem was tackled at all. That is not the case. The problem has become more rather than less urgent with the lapse of time and the growth of traffic.

There is no doubt about the need of a road bridge at Charing Cross. Anyone who has sat in a Service 68 bus, whiling away the time by counting the stones of Somerset House, while market gardeners' carts, brewers' drays and the like issue in a slow but far from stately procession from the Strand and Wellington Street; anyone who has had this experience must have felt that Camden Town was a very long way. Hardly better off are those more opulent ones who take a taxi from Charing Cross to Waterloo. A pleasant little tour past all the Government offices, is enlivened by a sight of the Horse Guards and a prolonged view of the base of Big Ben, while traffic streams out of the Embankment.

Clearly such congestion cannot be allowed to continue, and one alternative to the rejected scheme is to leave Charing Cross station where it is and build a road bridge eastward of it. This would be inconvenient for land traffic, but disastrous for users of the river. Few of us travel by water in London and we are therefore apt to overlook the fact that the Thames is a great highway. But the men who use it are well aware that another bridge in this reach of the river may tilt the balance from difficulty to danger. The daily miracle of manoeuvring half a dozen barges of a hundred tons apiece through Charing Cross

bridge and then through the two bridges at Waterloo (which lie almost at right angles to the railway bridge), while avoiding another string travelling in the opposite direction, is unnoticed by most Londoners. It is a great tribute to the skill of the bargees, but that does not entitle us to put an extra and unnecessary strain upon them.

The L.C.C. has apparently no alternative at all. It has already begun to sulk like a naughty little boy and has in effect told us: "If you don't play my game you shan't play at all!" Meanwhile we may look forward to the pleasant prospect of Waterloo bridge falling down, while, owing to the uncertainty of the position, the Southern Railway will allow their monstrous Hungerford bridge slowly to sink into the slime, which is the only fit place for it. So we shall have the temporary Waterloo bridge as the sole, shaky survivor of a decrepit trio—a fit site for a statue of Macaulay's New Zealander.

Something must be done, but whatever it is it must be the outcome of a large view. No merely local solution must be sought, such as the widening of old Waterloo bridge—that would only make matters worse at Aldwych. Nor must the present alone be taken into account; the future development of the south bank must be foreseen and provided for. The engineers have failed. The artists have talked. Let the architects make their attempts. They are planners probably by nature but certainly by training.

Town planning is their province and this is a case for town planning on the most liberal scale. Westminster and Waterloo bridges must be relieved, but not at the cost of increased congestion, either in the Strand or at the Elephant and Castle. Though we hesitate to make specific suggestions upon so technical a matter, it is surely obvious that adequate approaches to the new bridge must be designed from the Strand and the Embankment; which means the end of Charing Cross station and the rabbit-warren of the Adelphi. The problem on the south side is to spread the traffic so that even if it is not immediately possible, some lessening of the congestion at the Elephant and Castle can be devised later on. A scheme of such magnitude superposed, as it would have to be, upon the actual activities of a great city, demands the collaboration of experts of many kinds.

But at the moment the chief occupation of the experts seems to be the writing of letters to the newspapers to criticize the other experts, and meanwhile the position gets worse. We suggest that the Government first makes up its mind whether Parliament or the London County Council is the final authority; and having done that, it or the L.C.C. should then appoint a small Committee with power, not merely to deliberate but to decide; and further that a time-limit be set for the pulling down of both Waterloo and Charing Cross bridges and the reconstruction of both. The Baldwin Government muddled and delayed for four years over this matter; the MacDonald Government seems likely to do the same if it lasts as long. But the Minister of Transport is said to be one of the two capable men in the Ministry—Mr. Clynes, we presume, is the other—and we invite him to bestir himself. Otherwise his effigy may yet stand beside Macaulay's New Zealander in contemplation of another lost opportunity.

## THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

BY SIR T. COMYN-PLATT

WHATEVER the precise number of casualties up to date, as a result of Indian disturbances, it is well to remember that they are infinitesimal as compared with the population, which is close upon 319 million souls. And one must expect such disturbances from time to time, for Fanaticism never yet walked hand in hand with Reason. Neither is the cause of the present trouble confined to India. There are fanatics, and worse than fanatics in England, too, anxious to blow the spark of lawlessness to a flame at any time and in any place. The curious thing is, considering the amount of blowing, how ill the fire has burnt. And the explanation lies in the fact, firstly that the vast majority of Indians realize the advantages of our rule, and secondly, that Government has the necessary force at its disposal to maintain law and order. As to whether too much leniency has been indulged is open to argument. Sterner measures at the outset are often less costly in the end. But that peace and quiet will be restored, before long, is as certain as that night follows day.

But if ever there was soil for the weed of sedition, the North-West Frontier has always been regarded by the revolutionary, both in Europe and India, as the ideal spot. Here, in a mountainous district of fir and pine that top the peaks, many of which are 10,000 feet high, a mosaic of tribes—Wazirs, Mahsuds, Sheranis, Powindahs—have always disputed our rule and glorified in their independence. And the Amir is in no better favour, though the Afghans are of the same language and religion. How comes it then that such combustible matter has not gone off with the present explosion?

The explanation lies in the fact, admitted by the tribesmen themselves, that Trading is far more lucrative than Raiding. And the British Government has made it so. After all, the root impulse of a raid is to satisfy a want and if that can be supplied by less precarious means, why not try it? And the tribesmen have, and that with the most satisfactory results alike to themselves and Government. The pity of it is that our Frontier policy, as now pursued, was not adopted sooner. And the blame is not entirely with India. Whitehall is far more responsible in that there has never been a systematic and sustained effort of pacification. That is one of the main objections to the Key of India being in London. For instance, formerly, a punitive expedition, having achieved its object, troops were withdrawn, leaving, as invariably happened, the conquered free to repeat the offence or vent his wrath on some neighbouring tribe friendly to Government. Effective occupation, it is true, is costly, but a policy of pat and run is calamitous. And this was our rule of action up to within ten years ago.

The evacuation of Wana in 1919, a strategic frontier post, is a case in point; the decision nearly lost us the extensive district of Waziristan, and certainly all our prestige. Fortunately, however, in course of time wiser counsels prevailed; we had learnt our lesson; where we penetrated we stayed. Still, that was not sufficient. If these tribes, to whom raiding was natural, as also profitable, were to learn the advantage resulting from law and order, it was essential to make peace worth the keeping. Accordingly, friendly relations were cultivated with the most influential Khans, or headmen, who, under our guidance, set to work to enlist local levies for the maintenance of order generally along the Frontier. Government bore the cost, but time has fully justified the expense, for whereas ten years ago raids, murders and kidnapping were ordinary occurrences, to-day such Border offences have been reduced to a minimum.

But our efforts towards a better understanding did not stop here. Their own lands being non-supporting, it was essential to increase the means and opportunity of subsistence. And here was the head and front of Government wisdom. After a period of some twenty-five years, a definite policy, as often rejected as advised, was finally decided upon. To this end, frontier posts were henceforth to be established, and, far more important, a system of lateral road construction was to be carried out, whereby troops and supplies could be transported quickly to any spot where danger threatened. Formerly, when a military expedition was to be undertaken, transport was available only by the most difficult tracks. The long, struggling caravan was continually being harassed by raiders with often disastrous results to the entire force. Now, however, with motor transport and metalled roads, things are very different; one can leave Peshawar and arrive at any frontier station, not only with ease, but within a few hours.

From the purely military standpoint alone such a policy has obviated many a punitive expedition. But over and above this, as a civilizing influence, the benefits of this road policy have been incalculable. After all, precisely the same method was adopted in Scotland some 200 years ago. Then, as the result of improved communications, England gained by the removal of the constant danger of rebellion, while inversely the Highlands were quick to profit by the social and commercial opportunities offered. There is every indication that, given time, things will turn out as satisfactorily on the North-West Frontier. Certainly things are moving surely in that direction, for as the result of freer communication and the establishment of a few native Posts, raiding in the Peshawar district has almost ceased. And, what is more, tribal hostility to our rule is changing to widespread appreciation owing to the trading facilities and general peace that has so far resulted. If this is not the case, how comes it that the Congress and Youth League at Peshawar have failed in their recent attempt to stir the Border tribes to revolt? A notorious outlaw was appealed to and followers, it was believed, by the thousand would arise at his bidding. But nothing happened. Indeed, far from there being any sign of a Frontier rising, many of the tribes—such, for example, as the Afridis, the Mahsuds and Wazirs—have actually placed themselves at the disposal of Government should their services be needed. Loyalty has been the note struck, and, be it noted, by tribes such as the Wazirs, who were our bitterest enemies in the Afghan War of 1919; as also the Mahsuds whose country we occupied in 1895. But not only have the revolutionaries of Peshawar done their utmost to incite Frontier trouble. At places such as Ghazni, Kandahar and Jellalabad all in Afghan territory, there are Bolshevik Consuls. It is difficult to believe that hostile propaganda is not their stock in trade and that they have not, as elsewhere, stoked the revolutionary fires. Meanwhile, disturbances in India will continue; the heather, once lighted and vigorously fanned, is not of a sudden extinguished. But when all is said and done, India, like every other country in the world, is but indulging the reckless aftermath of a world disturbance. It has come late because contentment, or perhaps ignorance and indifference, was prevalent. Disturbances such as the present are bound to recur—that is in the nature of things.

Within the coming weeks it will be seen how far the wind is Set Fair. At present, however, there is certainly no sign of general trouble. Here and there a few leaders, eager for loot, may whet the appetite of others, but that is far from admitting any widespread aversion to the British Raj, or an indication that the aspirations of Mr. Gandhi are either shared or considered by the tribes of the North-West Frontier.



## AGRICULTURE'S PROBLEM SOLVED

BY S. L. BENSUSAN

WHEN farmers began to feed their cereal and root crops to stock for lack of a market, something not far removed from a mild sensation was created in the world beyond their boundaries. Thoughtful men and women were made uneasy by the story of so much waste. But there was no outward, visible sign of a bad state of things. Food remained plentiful and, after all, the farmer is a man who lives a long way from cities where votes are easiest to collect, and devotes a great part of his leisure to grumbling. So he was left to feed his potatoes to his cows and his wheat to his pigs, and to make what further reductions may seem good to him in his arable cultivations and his staff, while the towns gave their spare time to further consideration of the problem of unemployment.

Now, to make matters simpler for the harassed agriculturist, the Ministry of Agriculture has published the results of certain experiments carried out by the Irish Free State. These are noteworthy. They establish the fact, surely unsuspected in circles where men investigate, that whole wheat is more nourishing than its own offals! Of the 504 lbs. that go to the quarter of wheat about 101 are offals—bran and pollards. The farmer sells his wheat to the miller and brings back the offals for his stock, while the miller, a careful man of business who makes no money, charges more for a hundredweight of offals than he will pay for a hundredweight of wheat! So the State has come to the rescue with sound advice. "Don't let the miller have your wheat," it says in effect, "feed it to your pigs. Their live weight will show a most satisfactory rise." As with wheat, so with potatoes. The foreigner can send us very large consignments, including new potatoes that come before the swallow comes and take the wealthy housewife's fancy. For the home supply the pig-sty is clearly the proper goal, and the Ministry has worked out the cost of cleaning and steaming, and published the price or food-value relationship between potatoes and barley meal. Four tons of potatoes, costing a trifle less than thirty shillings to mash and steam, are equivalent to one ton of barley meal, of which the value may be set down at about nine pounds. Now the farmer can't sell good potatoes at his own door for thirty-five shillings a ton, but he can charge himself that sum against his pigs, so making a profit on market prices, pay for the preparation and the fuel, and yet be further in pocket each time he saves the outlay on barley meal.

Through the mist and fog of the present agricultural situation, the truth shines clear. The farmer must consume his own crops, either directly or through his livestock. He must expand his capacity as a consumer, he must eat more pig; if need be he must invite his friends to help him. He should have a slogan. Let me suggest a couplet:

A porker a day  
Keeps bailiffs away.

We have half a million farmers and small-holders in the country. Let us train them up in the way they should go, and our twenty million acres or so of cultivable land will come into their own at last, while countless people will be attracted by the prospect of meals that must soon be unending. But do not let us deceive the farmer into a belief that he can limit his own responsibilities, or even reduce them, by selling his wheat-and-potato-fed pigs, the spoiled darlings of our greatest national industry. He should be warned in time that he cannot hope to sell those pigs for long or at a profit. Ireland and

Denmark, to name only two of many pig-exporting countries, will see to that. They do not feed pigs on whole wheat and ware potatoes. And they do not run twelve or more breeds of pig for the London market as our farmers do; they practise a uniformity which, though it cannot escape the charge of monotony, is commercially advantageous.

Another benefit of introducing large-scale home production on our farms is that it will avoid all interference with the middleman. He does not ask for market returns to show what he pays for the things he sells, he wants nothing of the ill-bred comment that is common in men's mouths. Leave him to deal on the one hand with the importer and on the other hand with the retailer and, by the time consumers buy the necessities of life, they will have the pleasure of knowing that they have contributed towards some of its luxuries for those who have sound business ideas.

The present position has its dangers—for the middleman. We often want to know why, when beef costs sixpence per pound on the hoof, the more reputable joints rise out of the reach of all save the wealthy. We ask why, when the farmer is getting a shilling for a gallon of milk, the man in the street should pay two shillings; why, when the loaf might cost sixpence and yield a profit to everybody, including the farmer, it should cost eightpence or eightpence-halfpenny and leave the farmer down and out! Middlemen resent this curiosity. It is un-English. It savours of the Spanish Inquisition. It is associated with "hordes of officials" armed with forms. Let us proceed rather in patience along the lines of sound endeavour, disposing of the farmer's surplus produce among the only things that will eat it, looking to the farmer to consume the fattened product in his turn. That way lies a contented world of agriculturists, diminishing, perhaps, in numbers, but not in girth.

## NEWS FROM RURITANIA

IN Ruritania—which is now, readers will be surprised to learn, an industrial country and not too prosperous—a revolution is proceeding. No news of this will be found in any paper, for officially it is called a reorganization, and reorganizations are not news. Consequently, the first intimation the Ruritanian taxpayer will receive will be the bill. Then he will have everybody's sympathy, and another shilling on the income tax.

A Socialist government slipped into power recently—in Ruritania—while the two older parties were making ugly faces at each other. On the advice of a septuagenarian bachelor, whom we may call Professor X, the Socialists decided to reorganize the Ruritanian educational system. Ruritania has had elementary schools for some fifty years, with the happy result that every Ruritanian is able to spell out the winner of the three-thirty, and to write the kind of letter that is the stand-by of the comic papers. Ruritanian children leave school at fourteen, knowing a good deal about football, folk-dancing, and the art of wasting time, and very little else. They forget the folk-dancing as soon as possible, but nobody has yet accused them of forgetting the other two items. Professor X determined to alter all that. The Ruritanian children are to remain at school for another year of folk-dancing, etc., and the whole system is to be changed. Every Ruritanian urchin, at the age of eleven, is to enter on a four-year course at a senior school. There is to be no escape from this cast-iron rule. Unhappy Ruritanian geniuses—they do occur sometimes, in spite of the folk-dancing, etc.—fit for promotion at nine is to waste two more years in the junior school. Professor X has forbidden him to advance. Ruritanian half-wits of eleven, unable to write their own names, must proceed

to the senior school for a four-year course in mechanics, trigonometry, stamped leather work, or whatever else occurs to Professor X, whose middle name is Procrustes.

This is how the X scheme works out in a typical Ruritanian town, which we may call Elemess. Its staple industry is in low water—the directors are said to be leaving the town owing to the high rates—but Elemess is to build four new senior schools. (Did I say that the Socialists have a majority among the Elemess Town Councillors?) The cream of the best lies behind. There is already a Central School at Elemess, to which admission is by competitive examination only. It does all the work that the new senior schools are to do, and a good deal more besides. It is to be abolished. The cream of the Elemess children are to be tied down to the folk-dancing, etc. The Socialists of Elemess have no use for higher education. Besides, the head of this school does not belong to their party. Their decision is heartily applauded by the Ruritanian Board of Education and by the teachers of the other schools, who cordially detest the tell-tale annual examinations.

Additional piquancy is lent to the affair by the fact that most Ruritanian parents strongly object to the additional school year. If either or both of the older parties—who are still making ugly faces at each other—were to advocate a reduction of the school leaving age to thirteen, with scholarships and maintenance allowances—at Central Schools such as the one to be abolished at Elemess—carrying the upper ten per cent. of intelligent children up to fifteen, they would gain the votes of all Ruritanian parents—those who want less schooling for their children and those who want more. Also, the income tax would be considerably reduced.

One would think that the chiefs of staffs of the older parties would perceive this and make a bee-line for it, but those chiefs of staffs—in Ruritania—are not noted for intelligence, which is a pity for the virtuous but powerless Ruritanian taxpayer. As the Mikado reminds us, virtue is triumphant only in theatrical performances.

ZENDA

## YOUNG ENGLISH COMPOSERS

[FROM A MUSICAL CORRESPONDENT]

THE daily Press has, naturally, been before me in chronicling an interesting musical event. Nevertheless, the concert of some works by Mr. Michael Tippett held at the Barn Theatre, Oxted, was sufficiently important for any comments, late as they are, not to appear otiose. The concert was important for several reasons—firstly, because the music showed not only promise but achievement; secondly, because the almost entirely amateur body of musicians showed a real appreciation for the work which gave the performance a sincerity which went far to mitigate a few little roughnesses. Finally, and most important of all, it gave a hearing to a young English composer who prefers sincerity to the pursuit of the exotic.

We, as a nation, have not always been timorous in matters of art, but for the last two hundred years we have been willing to award the palm elsewhere. In the eighteenth century fashion cultivated Italian music, in the nineteenth century German music was in vogue. The few English composers of those days were forced to write music that was, at least, superficially, Italian or German. The natural consequence was that the artistic value of their work was very slight, for they were working in an exotic medium. Sincerity is the keynote of art and no artist worth the name can subdue his individuality to the fashion of the moment. If he does he may produce an amusing parody, but that is all. Even so it is the personality of the writer of a parody that really gives it its

cachet. What would be the charm of Max Beerbohm's parodies without their "Maxiness"? It is the same with music. No Englishman can think like a German, or Frenchman; indeed, as our own folk-songs show, no Northumbrian can think like a Kentishman. Sincerity, then, being essential, no artist dare attempt the exotic. "French Oriental" music should be a sufficient warning to any young composer who is not satisfied with the example of Eugen d'Albert.

The re-discovery of old English music by some foreign musicians not very many years ago must have come as a shock to them as it certainly did to us. We have, however, an extraordinary capacity for absorbing shocks, and even after the publication of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, our own music excited very little attention. It only required Anton Rubinstein to include Byrd in his famous series of historical recitals and the appearance of the Dolmetsch family to add a final note of absurdity to our crazy attitude to native musicians. Slowly we were made to realize that men with such homely names as Wilkes, Morley and Jenkins were great masters. For the first time for two hundred years English music that did not pretend to be anything else had a chance of a hearing.

This is the phase of thought in which young composers find themselves to-day. Plenty of spade work has been done for them by such scholars as Fuller-Maitland, Barclay Squire and Edmund Fellowes, while older composers such as Vaughan-Williams have begun to pave the new road. Nobody expects music to go back two hundred years and develop as though Beethoven, Wagner, Brahms and the rest, including Stravinsky and Schönberg, had never been. They have transformed the art. Whether the new music is better or worse is purely a question of personal taste. It is, however, different and can never be the same again. What does remain the same is the inspiration, that is, the personal utterance of the artist. When we say that a piece of new music reminds us of the work of an old composer, we do not mean that the same chords and contrapuntal devices are used. We mean that the modern and the old composer have the same way of looking at life. For instance, in Mr. Tippett's work there is much that reminds us of John Jenkins, yet Jenkins's severe counterpoint is nowhere to be found in Mr. Tippett's work. What is common to both of them is their sympathy with the quiet English countryside.

Nevertheless, in spite of the signs, those in authority are still toying with the followers of Stravinsky, Schönberg and the rest, quite regardless of the fact that a new school is growing up under their noses. At least, one honourable society has made itself ridiculous by excluding the "very modern" only to chase breathlessly after it, when fashion had decreed it *passé*. Now is the time to correct such mistakes; there are plenty of young composers who have never worn the gaudy trappings of Stravinsky, who have never followed Schönberg on his pilgrimages of darkness, who have been content to give us their thoughts without affectations, without fear of misunderstanding and, above all, without self-consciousness. Such are many of our young men—Milford, Rubbra, Finzi, to name only a few. Yet not long ago Mr. Robin Milford complained that established conductors were not only very off-hand with these young men but careless of the scores entrusted to them. It cannot be good for English music that this attitude should persist. The organizers of important provincial festivals still play for safety in commissioning works from the elder men and thus prolonging the dying fall of romanticism, while there are others knocking on the door who are, I dare not say more sincere than Bax, Ireland or Frank Bridges, but whose work is now more truly representative and more significant of our musical renaissance.



## COVENT GARDEN: A SURVEY

WITH deep regret many opera lovers will say good-bye to the German artists, and realize that half the season is now over. It has been marked by the introduction of 'Die Fledermaus,' with all the unforgettable charm of Vienna. No wonder it achieved instant success in London, for it is a fine example of a *genre* particularly sympathetic to English taste, namely, comic light opera. The craving of the English for this form of entertainment is shown by the popularity of even tenth-rate musical comedies, but their preference for the best, when attainable, is proved by the super-popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan. 'Die Fledermaus' satisfies this craving, and it is a pity we have not more Bats in our English belfries.

We have again had an opportunity of studying Wagner's early development in the 'Flying Dutchman.' What a curious mixture the Dutchman is; as though Wagner, Verdi, Mozart and Weber had combined in the co-operative manner of the Russian "Five" to produce an interesting but uneven opera. Yet, in spite of this, Wagner's sincerity in expressing the tale carries us away. It is a pity that he did not make that voyage to England on which he first met the story of the Flying Dutchman at a later date, for Van der Decken is worthy of a music drama in Wagner's maturest style. Friedrich Schorr as the Dutchman was a wonderful figure of restrained emotion and tragedy, and the atmosphere was undoubtedly helped by the staging, for once really successful.

As usual, we have had our two cycles of the 'Ring.' After more than a thousand years Siegfried is again before us, now expressed in the heroic yet sensitive singing and acting, and splendid appearance of Herr Lauritz Melchior, and the impetuous and rhythmic vigour of Herr Rudolf Laubenthal. For the first time in our memory, Brynhild rode into the fire in a manner worthy of her hero. How much more significant the closing bars of 'Götterdämmerung' appear when we have that Valkyr figure in our minds. Opera is written for the stage, not the concert hall, and the effect of these seeming details is incalculable. 'The Ring,' as presented at Covent Garden, frequently loses points through unnecessarily inefficient staging. How is it that the ship of the Flying Dutchman can sail lirting over the open waters of the Covent Garden stage, and yet so little can be done with the scenic possibilities of a great dragon fight? If we cannot have the looming gigantic dragon, whose lair is the Prinz Regenten Theater at Munich, at least Siegfried might fight on a darkened stage surrounded by the red glow of the Dragon's breath, for even at midday dragons never fail to bring darkness. We were not surprised to find a quality of spiritual beauty in the Parsifal of Herr Fritz Wolff, after hearing his magic Lohengrin last year. He is, indeed, the true Parsifal of Wolfram von Eschenbach's poem, the physical hero, drawn by the mystic power within him to leave the service of the world for the service of the Grail.

In spite of the difficulty of obtaining operatic experience in this country, the English singers have shown fine quality this season. We shall remember Hedde Nash as David in 'Die Meistersinger,' Eva Turner as a beautiful Sieglinde, and Constance Willis singing a magnificent Fricka in that scene, so often the object of stale jibes, in which a Walsung's life hangs in the balance, and at last is forfeited. Arthur Fear was a more convincing Donner than we have heard, but we still long for the Donner whose voice will really be that of Thor the Thunderer forging the Rainbow Bridge. We are forced to the conviction that while the English excel in the quality of their

tenors (when shall we have a Siegfried from Mr. Walter Widdop?) there is a lack of deeper voices on the scale of the great Germans. Who is to follow the footsteps of Robert Radford and Norman Allen? The burden of the German season has rested on the shoulders of only two conductors. Perhaps the magic of Bruno Walter's name is liable to bewitch an English audience into unfair comparisons, for it does not seem that Robert Heger receives his due meed of enthusiasm and applause. His conducting of the second 'Ring' was always scholarly yet with a vibrant intensity throughout, rising to a real thrill at the great moments. The orchestra may have felt that "ten bows to the crotchet" restraint, while they slowly climb to the climax, as in Wotan's kiss to Brynhild, but the effect on the audience was electric. The very expression of Herr Heger's face as he conducts shows the utter sincerity of his work.

In conclusion, can no alteration be made in the early hours of the Wagner operas? There is, undoubtedly, an opera audience growing up in London among the young men and women of the business world, all of whom are debarred by the early hours from ever hearing 'Walküre,' 'Siegfried,' 'Götterdämmerung' and 'Parsifal.' This very season gave an instance of an eager class of students in a L.C.C. Literary Institute, ready each week, after a hard day's work, to spend two hours in the intelligent study of the German operas, saving their wages for tickets, and bitterly disappointed to realize that the times were for them impossible. Perhaps we must look to Sir Thomas Beecham to provide first-class opera for this new and discriminating audience.

## ST. ANDREWS

BY PETER TRAILL

A LOT of hard things have been said about British golfers since their heavy defeat in the Walker Cup, and I suppose they are being said all over again now that the *Golf Illustrated* Gold Vase has also fallen to the invaders.

Before the event at Sandwich there were many who prayed for rain, snow, sleet, hail and, above all, a high wind—even Mr. Bernard Darwin was spiteful—but Æolus kept the unfavourable winds tied up in his bag and Juno gave Jupiter a good breakfast so that only the sun shone and the zephyrs disported themselves. Spectators were thus saved a very unpleasant experience, for a wild day at Royal St. George's is not what most people want to endure. The pundits, also, were probably spared the knowledge that the Americans were not only superior when running before a breeze but also our masters when tacking.

In recent years the various cups and medals for which the members of the club, and in some cases of other clubs as well, compete have been won with scores between 71 and 74, but there are not many such and it is perfectly obvious that when the American side go round in 72 as a rule and between 67 and 71 quite often, the American standard of golf is better than our own. A lot of people keep on asking rather petulantly why that should be so. The reason is that they are better iron club players and that they are surer putters. Watching the Walker Cup match one saw, time after time, that the second shot as played by the American was a more accurate approach than that played by our own team. This accuracy enabled the American to have a reasonable chance of holing a three at a four or five bogey hole. He was always there or thereabouts, and this accuracy

was not confined to Mr. Jones, Mr. Voigt, Mr. Von Elm and Mr. Moe.

The trouble is not that our players cannot play the iron shots. Mr. Tolley began in the afternoon against Mr. Johnson with a beautiful approach and he followed it with another at the second. Mr. Wethered is probably the finest iron club in England; the trouble is that neither can do it all the time. Mr. Tolley developed a slice, Mr. Wethered did not judge the distances well; they left themselves, thereby, too much to do on the greens. They did not play badly, but they did not play well enough. What, then, is well enough? Candidly, I don't know. Mr. Stout went round in the morning in 68 and in the afternoon in 72, yet he was beaten by Mr. Moe on the last green. That is a standard of golf which is rarely attained in professional circles, but that is the standard which our opponents set and I cannot see how we are going to overreach it at St. Andrews. There is always hope; gossip writers say that Mr. Jones does not like eighteen-hole matches, but they are not quite so informative about Mr. Voigt, Dr. Willing and Mr. Von Elm. Having seen the whole American team in action I can only say that I don't see how, whether there is a gale or a snowstorm, whether the round is eighteen holes or two, one of the Americans can fail to win. But whether they do or don't there is no doubt, and can be none, that they are a better team than our own and would, I think, give a professional side in this country a good match and quite possibly a beating.

## A LETTER FROM OXFORD

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT]

**F**EW unsuspecting visitors could imagine that the Oxford of the Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, pleasant as it is, could be so transformed in the Trinity Term. So far the sun has not done its best: few college tennis courts have been fit for play, and current on the Cherwell has been much too strong to make punting popular. There is much room for improvement before Eights, which are almost upon us. It was, however, fine on May Morning when a larger crowd than usual were up by six o'clock to hear the Magdalen choir sing their hymn on the top of the tower, and watch the country dancing in the streets afterwards.

The President of the Union, Mr. J. P. W. Mal-lalieu (Trinity), has shown originality in his choice of subjects for the term. These include one on the reform of the Marriage Laws, and another attributing the decadence of the University to the Public School System. He is also attempting to overcome the difficulty which arises from the number of people who, even in the Summer Term, wish to speak in debate. When time would not allow all those who applied to speak before the adjournment of the House at 11.30, the previous practice has been to allow the later speakers only three minutes. It has now been suggested that, where possible, no one shall have less than eight minutes, and that as a result regular speakers will have their number of appearances limited to two or three per term. Last week an exceptionally large House for the Summer Term assembled to hear an American Debating Team maintain that one could be happier in America than in England. The Americans proved the most amusing orators that have visited the Union in recent years, and it was interesting to notice one of them taking down all the more successful witticisms of the Oxford speakers. In a light-hearted debate of this variety it was surprising to find these were all officers of the Conservative Association. Specu-

lation as to the possible candidates for the Presidency, and their prospects, has already begun, but the only definite arrangement so far is that Mr. Thomas has accepted an invitation to speak in the Presidential Debate which takes place in the sixth week of term.

Like the Union, the political Associations do not expect large attendances in the Summer. The Liberals have been recently addressed by Mr. Ramsay Muir, while the Conservatives started very early with an address from Lord Winterton in the first week of term. For a visit from Viscount Brentford they comfortably filled the Union Hall, and the speaker held his audience for an hour. It was interesting to note the enthusiasm of his appeal, based on honesty and sincerity, made to the undergraduate. The Conservatives start their year of office this term, so that their officers can retire into private life in the term in which they take their Schools. Mr. John Boyd-Carpenter (Balliol) has succeeded Mr. Patrick Hamilton (Trinity) as President. The term of three years which Lord David Cecil has been serving as Vice-President has just concluded, and Mr. Keith Feiling (Christ Church) has returned to help the Association with its difficulties. He has already shown an active interest in the term's arrangements.

Mr. Wentworth-Shields (Balliol) has succeeded Mr. Hilary Noble (Balliol) as President of the Oxford Carlton Club, which is becoming more and more popular, and rightly so, owing to the improvements made this year in food and service, and the excellent wine list.

## YES, I KNOW

BY FRANCIS R. ANGUS

**T**HE world is full of trouble  
Yes, I know.  
The world is but a bubble.  
Yes, I know.

But in spring  
Soft breezes blow  
And green things grow.

Then in summer  
One can lie  
Beneath the sky,

In the grass,  
Beside a tree,  
Or swim in sea.

Leaves in autumn  
As they turn  
From green and burn

Are worth watching,  
And in winter  
When weather's bitter

Bare branches make  
Lace designs  
With twig outlines,

And sheets of ice  
With drifting snow  
Make the heart glow  
Though the world  
Is full of trouble  
As we know.





THE RIGHT HON. NOEL BUXTON, M.P.

## THE THEATRE

### MAGNIFICENT MELODRAMA

By GILBERT WAKEFIELD

*Othello.* By William Shakespeare. Savoy Theatre.  
*The Beggar's Opera.* By Mr. Gay. Lyric, Hammersmith.

THE very simple truth about 'Othello' is that it is the most magnificent humbug ever written. And the genius of Shakespeare is abundantly proved by the fact that while one listens to this grand poetic melodrama in the theatre one is utterly unconscious of those colossal blunders (euphemistically described as problems by his sycophantic commentators) which reveal the carelessness with which he adapted Cinthio's straightforward story for his own dramatic ends. 'Othello' is not only a supreme example, but also a supreme warning, to those who contemplate dramatizing other people's novels.

The most important change that Shakespeare made in dramatizing Cinthio's story was to make (or rather fake) a hero out of the original Othello and a villain out of Cinthio's Iago. In place of an Ensign who is merely "wicked by nature as any man that ever lived in the world," he gives us an Iago who is more consistently wicked than any villain that ever lived in a play. Cinthio's Moor of Venice was part fool, part brute, and was eventually killed in exile by Desdemona's righteously avenging relatives; Shakespeare, though unable to make a hero of Othello, uses all his gifts to make him a "sympathetic" character. But through all the disguises thrust upon them, some of their original humanity is faintly visible, so that we feel (just as Macaulay realized an audience of persons more sophisticated than his contemporaries might feel) a certain disgust at the stupidity and violence of Shakespeare's Moor, and mingle an element of respect and esteem with our disapproval of Iago's villainy.

Certainly, the production at the Savoy does everything that can be done to produce the moral judgments aimed at by Shakespeare. The casting of Mr. Robeson for the title-rôle means an enormous gain in sympathy for Othello. In the earlier scenes a Moor, or an English actor with a light-brown make-up, might provide a more convincing picture of a Venetian generalissimo; Mr. Robeson seemed too dull, too much like a loutish and good-natured schoolboy, and rather to have had his greatness thrust upon him than to have achieved it as a strategist. But as Iago's dupe, as the overgrown baby who breaks his toys in a fit of ungovernable jealousy, this negro actor seemed to me exactly right. His Othello, naturally and properly, had much in common with his Emperor Jones: a great tribal chief, self-confident and happy so long as all went smoothly for him, but helpless against the weapons of a civilized intelligence, and as much bewildered by his own emotions as by Iago's playing on them. Mr. Robeson let loose a fury that was primitive—and, therefore, pitiful and terrifying.

Mr. Maurice Browne's Iago was too—what is it?—too modest? Or was it simply that Mr. Robeson's roaring tones and huge physique overwhelmed this rather fragile, cultured villain? And was not this overwhelming of Iago emphasized, rather than counterbalanced, by Miss Van Volkenburg's production? The part is cleverly written, but badly distributed. To talk of Iago as mere "motiveless malignity" is arrant nonsense; he had a perfectly good motive, in fact he had several perfectly good motives, for hating both Othello and Cassio so bitterly as to plot against them. Unfortunately, Shakespeare (probably because poetry and a dramatic

scene interested him much more than Iago's character) made the colossal blunder of explaining the most important of these motives in the first three minutes of the play, and omitting to repeat it subsequently for the benefit of the late arrivals and the slower-witted members of the audience. To thrust two unrecognizable characters on to a darkened stage, and then to make one of them, without the slightest preparation, and without even naming the persons he is talking about, utter a few lines of rambling, complicated explanation as to why he hates some unidentifiable "him"; and then for the rest of the play to assume that the audience has not only understood but thoroughly appreciated this exposition of Iago's motives—all this is such blazingly bad technique that the producer ought to use every means within his power to counteract it. Yet this vitally important opening scene is played at the Savoy as though it were of no more significance than the curtain-raising dialogue of a modern comedy, instead of being "ponged" or "plugged" or whatever the contemporary colloquialism is for so forcing it upon the audience's attention, that even the stupidest member of that audience cannot fail to understand it at the time and remember it through the subsequent—and in this case consequent—events. One feels that Shakespeare must have had a hint from some bold friend that he had understressed, and technically misplaced, Iago's motive for revenge; and that he thereupon interpolated in his text the two soliloquies in which Iago mutters, vaguely and unconvincingly, about Othello "twixt my sheets," and Cassio, "with my nightcap, too." The Savoy production slurs the first and omits the second of these later efforts to explain Iago's conduct; and that would be all right if the opening scene were given its full value. But it isn't. The result is an Iago who seems to justify Coleridge's epithet: "motiveless"—though not the alliterative noun that follows it. Mr. Maurice Browne is careful not to over-emphasize the "malignity" of Iago, his artistic conscience refusing to allow him to be anything so ridiculously melodramatic as a mere embodiment of Evil. One is forced to assume that this Iago has some perfectly sound reasons for his hatred of the Moor and Cassio; but one hasn't even the foggiest idea as to what those reasons are.

Miss Peggy Ashcroft is to be congratulated generally, and particularly on contriving to give Desdemona a delightful, timid cheekiness when petitioning her husband on behalf of Cassio—of whom Mr. Montesole gave a clever and consistent portrait, but too weak and foppish: a portrait of Roderigo, I should have said, rather than of Cassio, did I venture to question the traditional interpretation of Iago's "snipe." Miss Sybil Thorndike (as Emilia) was like a greyhound straining at the leash until her chance came at the very end; whereupon she slipped her collar, dashed into the fray, bit everyone in sight, and thereby (to vary the metaphor) flung open the windows of that stuffy room, so full of sentimentalized, theatrical tragedy, and let in the fresh air of common-sense. Scenically, the whole production was both interesting and decorative; but that scenes so quiet to look at should be so noisy to set is as surprising as it is regrettable!

I beg to call attention to Sir Nigel Playfair's warning that the present revival of 'The Beggar's Opera' is (1) for a limited number of performances, and (2) the last that will ever be given at the Lyric, Hammersmith. There is little new to be said about it, except that Miss Olive Groves, the latest Polly, is delightful both to listen to and to look at; that Miss Elsie French, Mr. Scott Russell, and others who helped to popularize this incomparably delightful opera, are back at the Lyric, playing their familiar rôles; and that Mr. Frederick Ralanow's Macheath is still the most perfect work of art to be seen and heard in any London theatre.



## THE FILMS SORDID AND GAY

BY MARK FORREST

*LummoX.* Directed by Herbert Brenon. The Avenue Pavilion.  
*Under the Texas Moon.* Directed by Michael Curtiz. The Alhambra.

THE Avenue Pavilion has recently been re-seated and wired for talking pictures. I regret to say that while the wiring appears to be satisfactory, the seating is very uncomfortable; resting my chin on my knees is not a pose which I want to assume, neither do I care for my fellow creatures enough to enjoy their knees in the small of my back. 'LummoX' is the first talking picture to be shown at this cinema, which made quite a name for itself by introducing to the public silent films, especially European ones, which appealed to the discriminating rather than to popular tastes. It was a policy which paid very well, but to maintain this distinction with the talking films is not going to be an easy achievement. The first venture, at any rate, has a story which should not appeal to any but sophisticated persons. Fannie Hurst's book, from which the film was taken, was a sordid novel which sold very well here and in America owing in part to its outspokenness and in part to the drawing of the principal character, "a clumsy, stupid person, an awkward bungler." Bertha, the lummoX, who is born in a sailors' lodging house, who comes as a cook to Mrs. Farley, where the son rapes her, who signs away the subsequent boy, who returns to the lodging house, who never reveals herself to her successful son and finally resides with a Jew and his numerous children, is not a heroine for popular consumption; neither is the evening a particularly cheerful one, except when the young lady who is in love with Mrs. Farley's son pronounces the word *soufflé*. The picture, nevertheless, is well made and Mr. Brenon, whose former work entitles him to a high place among film directors, maintains his reputation. Winifred Westover's performance of the inarticulate drudge is a good piece of acting.

The picture at the Alhambra, which is filmed in colour, has an elusive story, and if Frank Fay, who plays the leading part, did not give a very good performance, I am afraid the appreciation would be equally elusive. The period of the film is the time when Texas was Texas and men were men, which means a lot of *vino, caballeros, señoritas, haciendas*, guitars, oaths, rustlers and guns. Don Carlos, the gay cavalier, promises for an adequate sum of money to discover what has become of some hundreds of head of cattle which have been rustled and to bring them together with the rustler safely back home. He does not, however, bother his head so much over the cattle as he does over the women. His conquests include Raquel Torres, Myrna Loy, Armida, Betty Boyd and Mona Maris, and they seem to me to be well worth making, but he has so many to conquer that there is no time to show how he really does find the cattle. Find them, nevertheless, he does—there is no mistaking their discovery because the lowing and the bellowing widely proclaim it—without the help of anyone and with no exertion at all. I can only conclude that he has a marvellous nose for bullocks or that he rustled them himself. He admits the latter at the end of the film, but whether in jest or earnest, I do not know. Furthermore, I do not think anyone else connected with the film knows and I do not suppose it really matters because he rides off with Mona Maris to see what he can do under a Mexican moon. If that last sentence reads like a *non sequitur*, it reads just like the film talks.

## LITERARY COMPETITIONS—221

SET BY THE EDITOR

A. At some indeterminate date in the future, England is entirely feminized, and the House of Commons decides to recognize the logic of the situation by enacting that henceforth only women shall be eligible for membership. A First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of One Guinea is offered for a description of 300 words in the style of Macaulay, of the famous scene in which the last male Speaker makes the last male speech and resigns his office on the ground that it would be an intolerable contradiction for a man to be at the head of the Mother of Parliaments.

B. Swinburne's exquisite poems, 'Laus Veneris' and 'Dolores,' have from time to time been reprobated for the warmth of their imagery. Always anxious to be on the side of the angels, the SATURDAY REVIEW therefore offers a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a stanza of the same subject and metre, but written in the pure and innocent style of Miss Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

### RULES

- i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week: LITERARY 221A or LITERARY 221B).
- ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.
- iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.
- iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of the rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, June 2. The results will be announced in the issue of June 7.

### RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 219

SET BY JOHN FILMER

A. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best conversation, not exceeding three hundred words in length, between Botticelli's 'Venus' on her return to the Uffizi from London and the central figure in the adjacent 'Primavera.'

B. We offer a prize of One Guinea for the best sixteen lines of alliterative verse, being an extract from a lament by King Alfred's Bard on his Royal Master's acceptance of the principle of naval parity with the Danes.

### REPORT FROM MR. FILMER

219A. So there were some people who did not go to the Italian Art Exhibition after all! I do wish, though, that some competitors had examined the catalogue before they rushed, not into print, but into manuscript. The competition was rather a failure because some were disqualified for making the 'Primavera' talk as though she, too, had visited London, while one, to be on the safe side, submitted, not a conversation, but a monologue. Had there been penalties as well as prizes, N. B.'s entry would have been safe, if only for the atrocious pun: "There Arno

flies on me." I liked Athos's effort the best, if only because of his graceful reference at the end to the somewhat obvious condition of the young person in the 'Primavera'; I therefore award the first prize to him. I am unable to award a second prize.

#### THE WINNING ENTRY

*Venus*: How delicious to see you all again! Centra, darling, give me a kiss!

*Central Figure* (makes graceful reverence): Madama! Welcome home! Needless to ask, how does your Highness; lovelier, more wonderful than ever! May we kiss your hands?

*V.*: Nice of you, I'm sure. I've had a ripping time. London—well, as I heard a girl say—charming, but talked through her pretty nose—"It's Some Hub." My dear, all the people, simply the entire population, came. There simply can't be any more!

*C. F.*: Pray tell us, Madama, about that gentleman we saw pictured, being presented to you by the Signore Duce. Elderly, but comely; Messire Giovanni Toro.

*V.*: No, dear, you're wrong. Dear Benito presented him to "The Spirit of Italian Art"; I don't know the young person.

*C. F.*: But, Madama, she was much like you, and (curtsying) who but your Highness could so fitly personify it? And what of the famous Messires Turner, Lawrence, Reynolds?

*V.*: Heavens, my dear, they're all dead; killed in the war, probably. (Did you know the English were in the war?) But, bother this talk of Art! It bores me. Before they hung us, I saw some stuff they had in another exhibition. They pay a sculptor to make statues for scaring birds, and a painter who does *arlecchini*, and insanitary people rolling off sloping beds, has been made a Cavalier. Don't let's talk about Art in England. I wouldn't live there, anyway; they've about one man to every seven women.

*C. F.*: What of the women, Madama?

*V.*: Never saw so many pretty faces—or so many frumps! In "the altogether," swish painters paint only the frumps. "Swish," that's English for *di bon tuono*. Darling, how well that frock is looking! And—come closer—they whisper, smilingly).

(*Curtain.*)

ATHOS

219B. The SATURDAY REVIEW evidently does not circulate among enthusiasts for Anglo-Saxon verse. Though the content was often pleasing, the form of many of the entries was weak, while the rest, apparently, did not trouble about it at all. Many spoilt their entries by making the *cæsura* a boundary for the alliteration; such a line as W. G.'s for instance: "Sinks now the sea-star of England enfeebled," reads like a copy of Owen Seaman's parody of 'The Ring,' whereas he only needed to transpose "of England" and "the sea-star" to get a perfect line in the manner of Cynewulf. N. B. was amusing in his references and might have got the prize had he claimed his entry as an authentic translation by Pope. Such a couplet as:

Hero, all heedless, who the hussif's ire  
Incurred for her charred cakes before the fire

is too good for the oblivion that overtakes unsuccessful entries for this competition. Pibwob gets the first prize. His effort has something of the highfalutin manner of the old Anglo-Saxon poets and the verse goes with a swing, the accent falling correctly after the *cæsura*. Charles G. Box was a very close second, but his lines read more like a translation of a medieval chronicle than an Anglo-Saxon poem. However, the form is good and I award him the second prize.

#### FIRST PRIZE

But to-day the tongue of triumph is still,  
Fortune frowns in our faces to-day  
Because of the bond and bargain agreed.  
Our shield of ships is shent and scattered,  
And our wooden wall is wasted redeless.  
England must endure equal in tale  
The Northman's navies, in the narrow seas.  
The vessels of the Vikings, victory-prompters.  
The Dane has doomed the delight of the roses  
That our glorious grandsires, gardened in England  
Since Hengest hither and Horsa came;  
Our flowers shall fade and fall in the dust,  
Melting as mists, in the morning sun.  
Sorry serfs and slaves shall we live,  
Wearing the weeds and willow of woe  
Till our former fame is forgotten forever.

PIBWOB

#### SECOND PRIZE

Nay, never such notions in noble noddle were,  
Phrases fair of face, of false and fickle frame:  
Pacts of peace and principles of parity;  
For a world without war is plum-pudding without plums.

Not thus at paltry price purchased is peace,  
By subtle schemes and strange, that none should stronger be:

Nay, well I wot, 'twere wise to wrestle and work  
And strain to be stronger than he thou strivest with.  
Broken were they on the brine, in battle broke,  
Smitten alike on sea and sward were they:  
Fain would they flee full fast to their fiords,  
Yet loth to leave the land where long they had lived.  
Therefore, in dread of damage, they demanded  
That Wessex weakly should her war-ships whittle;  
And Alfred, albeit able man, alas and alack,  
Cozen'd by crafty counsellors, did consent.

CHARLES G. BOX

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, though he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him on Tuesday.

#### 'FIDDLESTICKS'

SIR,—Even as I began to write of Mr. Percy Allen's case for de Vere as Shakespeare I recognized that I was entering into a conflict in the dialectic of which I was entirely untrained. I felt as Alice must have felt in Wonderland, and was filled with dreadful forebodings. Now comes Mr. Allen's letter in your issue of May 17, and I see how well-grounded my presentiments were. I am covered in confusion most confounded. Not that I regret or recall a word that I wrote, but I would so much rather have written them of some other Shakespearean heretic. Mr. Allen may not believe it, but I like him; and I may assure him at once that I was not arraigning his argument for de Vere, which, apart from the 'Echoe' and 'Roe' cryptograms, I found quite ingenious. What I was attacking was the initial assumption that led him on his wild goose chase. It was the assumption that Shakespeare did not write the plays with which he has been credited that I called "amazingly gratuitous and impertinent." Mr. Allen says that these words are easily said, since they call for neither knowledge, intelligence, nor thought. He is wrong. The words were not easily said, and were the result of knowledge, intelligence and thought. Other words kept



cropping up, to which, Sir, you would have taken just exception. Had we been discussing the matter in a smoking-room, or had I been putting the words in the mouth of a character in a play, I should have said that this assumption was simply—but knowledge, intelligence and thought again restrain me.

Mr. Allen says that neither he nor his fellow-workers are to be turned aside from their chosen course by bludgeonings and fiddlesticks. I was afraid so. He adds that their case for *de Vere* is fast gaining converts among the many thoughtful and open-minded people who are wholly dissatisfied with the Stratfordian case. I can well believe it. But if I may say so, epithets like "thoughtful" and "open-minded" are easily said. Minds may be full of thoughts that are not worth a penny; minds may be open to every bat that seeks a belfry; and people who are wholly dissatisfied with the Stratfordian case are never likely to be satisfied with any other. Yesterday Bacon, to-day *de Vere*, to-morrow the Cecil family, and the day after Prester John.

May I say in conclusion how sorry I am that I did not tell your readers that Mr. Allen argued that Oxford may have played kingly parts in Shakespeare's plays. It is true he has no actual evidence of this, but even if he had proved his case, the "actor" I see written all over the plays is not the dilettante amateur, who may or may not have been "all right on the night," but the old "stock actor" who knew his job from A to Z and applied this knowledge to every play he wrote. For the rest, I was interested in Mr. Allen's argument for *de Vere* as the author of the sonnets, and I am really sorry that I cannot agree with him, for the simple reason that the man who wrote the plays has written his name all over them, not in cryptograms, but in words and thoughts of a beauty that none other in that age could have compassed. Still, I like Mr. Allen, and wish he would come out of his Wonderland, but I fear he never will.

I am, etc.,  
YOUR REVIEWER

#### MR. HECHT'S ECONOMICS

SIR,—I trust that you will be able to publish my reply to your reviewer.

1. Of course Lord Ashfield might have "squashed together in an erect position as many passengers as possible" if he had had a monopoly as your reviewer conceives it, but he couldn't if his monopoly was controlled, as, in fact, it is. I insist that competition was a most inefficient method for providing extra seating, and had it not been restricted the streets would have been choked with buses. I recall the remark of the conductor of one of ten empty buses in a row: "People have no time to take a bus now." I might add that your reviewer misquoted me. I never said that "the man in the street can scarcely quote a single benefit from competition." What I wrote was: "He would be hard put to cite a single instance where competition has been necessary. . . ; or to mention a case where man's eagerness to make a profit, i.e., self-interest, would not have provided a better stimulus than competition, i.e., conflict of individual interests."

2. Your reviewer evidently finds a difficulty in making such a distinction, and he now wants to know whether a spirit of "rivalry" does not prompt people to better their condition. But rivalry is not synonymous with competition. Let us cite J. S. Mill: "Co-operation is the noblest ideal because it transforms human life from a conflict of classes struggling for opposite interests to a friendly rivalry in the pursuit of a common good for all."

3. Had I intended to make the ridiculous assertion that prices are virtually the same all over London, I should hardly have stressed the hundreds of shops

in better and poorer districts, in Mayfair and in Hoxton. No intelligent woman would discover here an ambiguity in phrasing.

4. Your reviewer retracts his jibe on the subject of natural economic laws and a physiological law, but tries to maintain his position by asking what food Nature intended us to grow at home. The answer is, of course, such staple food as will grow at home, as potatoes or apples, but not rice or bananas. The determinate factor in the production of a people's necessities of life is climatic conditions. And as Nature does not provide our diet, but limits what we can produce, I am not concerned with crab apples, while it might be suggested that Nature did not provide cheap and rapid transport.

5. Your reviewer describes how, when children were permitted to work in mines and factories, there was a high birth-rate. These children were mostly born, therefore, in dire poverty, so that we have here an admission that the absence of family allowances combined with *laissez-faire* led to an excessive birth-rate among the unfit, while the well-to-do practised birth control, my contention, Malthus or no Malthus.

6. It is "the acme of perversity" to hint that the transfer of capital and labour to employments more profitable than those of shipping, mining, or the cotton trade implies mobility of capital and labour. Here is a definition of such mobility. "Capital and labour can readily be transferred from one industry to another within a country; artificers thrown out of employment could immediately obtain alternative employment." And here is my statement: "By safeguarding the home market, British labour could gradually be transferred from low-waged to higher-waged industries; British capital could be diverted from unprofitable to profitable employments." Indeed, in the very chapter where I am accused of forgetting my moral one may read: "Competitive imports destroy the stability of home industries—make capital unproductive by leaving it standing idle—make labour unproductive by provoking unemployment," the reader being referred to the pages in Chapter V, not IV, in which the absurdity of mobility is emphasized.

I am, etc.,  
J. S. HECHT

#### WHEN HOMER NODS

SIR,—In a recent issue you gave two remarkable instances of blunders in identifying easy quotations from Tennyson. But what are you to expect when the daily Press sets such a bad example? I can cap your two instances with two on easier points—not literary points—in which the daily Press all went wrong together.

The Act of 1907, which appointed the Court of Criminal Appeal, gives the Home Office the right of remitting a dismissed appeal to the Court. This right was exercised for the first time two years ago by Sir William Joynson-Hicks (now Lord Brentford) and was rightly hailed by the Press as "unprecedented" and as "creating history." The execution of the culprit—a young man who was eventually hanged for matricide—was postponed. Will it be believed that the Press, totally oblivious of the earlier case, said just the same when Mr. Clynes similarly sent back the Fratton appeal?

But there is worse. A few days later it was announced that Sidney Harry Fox had decided not to appeal. Again the Press threw up its hands in despair and declared: "It is difficult to recall a previous case of a convicted murderer not appealing." Well, here are two:

(1) Case of Walter Burrows, Worcester police probationer, who murdered the landlord of the "Greyhound," his wife and infant son.

(2) Case of Frederick Stratton, who killed his sweetheart in a Great Eastern train and, pleading guilty, was sentenced to death in five minutes.

I could fill a page of your paper with blunders made during 1930.

I am, etc.,

ARCHIBALD GIBBS

#### MR. BALDWIN AND LORD BEAVERBROOK

SIR,—I find that there is some misunderstanding in certain quarters regarding my political views. I am a staunch Conservative. The SATURDAY REVIEW is also staunchly Conservative. It is the obvious duty of every Conservative who has at heart the welfare and prosperity of his country and the Dominions to give the policy of Empire Free Trade his active and unflinching support.

This policy, the Empire as an economic unit, is to my mind the only effective remedy for the alarming growth of unemployment. The Conservative Party should have the courage to fight for that policy. Let the Central Office put aside its present ambiguous methods. Let it come into the open. Let it stop this perpetual hedging and bickering. The party has been supplied with a battle cry that has stirred the country. Why does it not officially proclaim that cry with all its might, instead of leaving the ranks to do all the shouting, while the leaders spend their time in useless arguments about referendums and a dozen other hazy solutions which are merely stumbling blocks?

The Conservative Party, and by that I mean its Central Office, is too supine, too sluggish. It wants action and courage. Lord Beaverbrook's policy must be carried forward to victory by a party that is unanimous and impervious to criticism. Conservatives are asking why they are not such a party. It is for Mr. Baldwin and his associates at the Central Office to discard lethargy and procrastination and to show the country the way.

I am, etc.,

G. H. PINCKARD

Oxford and Cambridge Club, S.W.

SIR,—I wonder if the slow-moving British public realize what Lord Beaverbrook's service to their cause involves. Two years ago, in June of 1928, I took the liberty of warning the leader of one of the parties that Mr. Baldwin would of necessity be thrown out at the next election. That easy prophecy has since come true. Why was it of necessity that Mr. Baldwin should have lost the General Election with a majority in hand of over 400? The answer is Napoleon's, to the effect that "in war the moral forces in comparison with the material are as three to one." Mr. Baldwin's material force was a 400 seats majority. But wherein lay his moral force? *He had in the name of the Conservative Party played into the hands of the Socialist Party every time.* Witness his (1) flappers' vote; (2) his trying since 1927 to get our best pro-consul, Lord Lloyd, out of Egypt; (3) his unnecessary increase of the widows' pensions; (4) his worse than silly intervention on two successive occasions to foist upon the one Church of England two mutually inconsistent Prayer Books, both equally authoritative; (5) his wish to lose all our British credits at the last Hague Conference; (6) his most unfortunate and ill-timed offer, in a letter to the Socialist Prime Minister (without consultation of colleagues or even waiting for the publication of the Simon Commission Report) of Dominion status for India! These things may be good or bad, but they were not Conservative measures. And in passing them, can Mr. Baldwin be considered a Conservative at all? I, for one, could never vote Conservative again if Conservative principles are thus

to be betrayed by passing Whig measures under Tory standards.

At this point of superlative vacillation and ignominious indecision came Lord Beaverbrook's frank, decisive, clear-cut, straightforward plan. Lord Beaverbrook was a Liberal and no politician. But his policy is Conservative in the strict sense. His plan of campaign has given us the saving word. And he has "suited the action to the word and the word to the action." He was not afraid to propose a return to Protection. Said Disraeli:

The great question of Protection is not dead but is only sleeping. Protection to native industry is a fundamental principle. . . You have become united to Free Trade . . . and you must take the consequences. And the consequence I venture to predict will be that the House of Commons after a fair, full and ample trial of this great measure will be driven to *repeal* it from absolute necessity, though at the termination of much national suffering. (Buckle's 'Disraeli,' Vol. III, 26, 23).

Lord Beaverbrook was not afraid to propose a tax on food, remembering Lord Nelson's motto that "the boldest measures are the safest." Nor was he afraid to propound his plan in the House of Lords, where he had to encounter the wits of all the talents, nor to oppose the sham Tory falsehood that Canada would not share in any question of a preferential tariff. So far he has made no mistakes, not even in the matter of the Referendum. It is true that this carries the matter over the heads of Parliament. But the issue at stake is not a parliamentary matter, nor even a political matter. It is a grave national concern, involving a return to England's original fiscal constitution. The days of the nineteenth century are past and with it Victorian Cobdenism. Trade lies bleeding at every pore. And the nation must make up its mind, irrespective of party sections, either to "get on or get out." Lord Beaverbrook has been taunted with an attempt to "split the Party." Well, Sir, a party that cannot make up its mind on a supreme national issue wants splitting. What is of far more consequence is that a great imperial problem like this is never to be allowed to split the nation. We want what we have not got—a National Party.

I am, etc.,

A. H. T. CLARKE

The Rectory, Devizes

#### PROHIBITION

SIR,—In reply to Mr. R. G. Fife's letter in your issue of May 10, I beg to submit the following:

"There is some drinking among the poor in the United States beyond question. . . but there is far less drinking than when liquor was to be had at every corner. The volume of drinking is amazingly, gloriously lessened." (Evangeline Booth, in the *First Christian Chimes*, Los Angeles.)

"In 1869 Massachusetts was under Prohibition. In 1870, towns and cities that wished could open beer shops. . . As a result, take New Bedford; under beer saloons (1872) the number of crimes increased over 68 per cent., number of arrests for drunkenness over 120 per cent." (Mrs. Coolidge.)

"They [referring to the citizens of the United States] shut up the saloons. . . and found immediately that they could shut up a good many prisons as well." (G. B. S. in 'The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism,' page 120.)

"When public opinion is properly educated on the subject of Prohibition, the law will be adequately enforced." (Henry Ford.)

I am, etc.,

S. A. P. COOPER

Cannes, France



## IN GENERAL

**A** WET week-end in the country was enlivened for me by some varied "items," as the book-sellers say, of Americana. Say rather, Americanissima: for it was the life of political Chicago and of theatrical Broadway, at its most violent and most bedizened, that mainly held my half-fascinated, half-horrified attention. Indeed, it almost hypnotized me. Outside the cottage the wind from the Downs seemed as the stunning roar of the Chicago "Loop," and the stars above paled before memories of the glaring electric boasts of Times Square, Roxy's, the Paramount and the West 40's. . . .

Mr. William Hale Thompson—no, one can only say "Big Bill" Thompson—mayor of Chicago, has been rather out of the news lately. Through certain permutations of the democratic system, incomprehensible to any merely amateur observer of the United States, that once formidable figure seems now to be shorn of his full power, although he remains, a mayor of the Palace, the titular head of his vast kingdom until some time in 1931. But the hamstrung giant has found his biographer. And to any enquiring minds who may still be interested in a system of mob government of such a kind that great masses in one of the world's largest cities could be fully persuaded that His present Majesty was conspiring against the independence of the United States in general and Chicago in particular, I commend Mr. John Bright's biographical study of Big Bill's career, recently published in New York. It is phonetically entitled 'Hizzoner Big Bill Thompson'; but I was chiefly attracted to it by noticing that the author opened his list of bibliographical sources with 'Gargantua and Pantagruel,' 'Gulliver's Travels' and 'Don Quixote.' This, I thought, must surely be the right approach to such a theme. And neither in the gigantic fantasy, in the atmosphere of Yahooism, nor in the windmill-tilting, was I disappointed. The book might well have been better written (and its allusiveness often makes it hard going for the foreign reader), but as a repository of facts concerning three-hundred per cent. Americanism it is worthy of startled remembrance.

The sort of politics one moves through in this book is really very simple. It may be tabularly demonstrated thus:

Number of municipal posts on B.B.'s	
accession to power in 1915	... 20,000
Number of appointments made by B.B.	
during first year of office	... 30,675

But the sort of politician who is needed to keep such a system lucratively working is less simple. Mr. Fred Lundin, for instance, the Swedish electoral boss behind the Thompsonian throne—"insignificant me" he styled himself in a moment of undesired publicity—twists and turns through the story in a very baffling way. His suites in the Sherman and La Salle Hotels were ringed with secrecy and bodyguards; his letters on matters of politics seldom bore his own signature; neither he nor his chief lieutenants ever conversed with the mayoral headquarters except over private telephone wires; but at least one of his recorded utterances has a fine ring of open sincerity—"To hell with the public!" said Mr. Lundin after a successful election; "we're at the feed-box now." The whole picture of jobbery and graft, gangsters and racketeers, ignorance and exploitation, is one of the most phantasmagoric things our contemporary life can offer. It may seem all unutterably remote from English life and English concerns; but it is not to be passed over lightly on that account. You may laugh at the grotesque "parades" of paid demonstrators marching the city streets with allegorical groups of Thompsonian

boons and blessings, at the astounding rhodomontade of a political association's committee which met, literally, at the wall of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, and passed a resolution, "Here in the shadows of the temples and scenes of the great ones who labored and died for love of mankind, urging Honble. William Hale Thompson to offer himself as candidate for re-election"; but you cannot escape the fact that all this is part of America. And to understand the whole, one must understand the parts.

It was an odd copy of *Variety* that gave me glimpses of another part. To connoisseurs of journalism *Variety* can safely be recommended—although it is my impression that Mr. Sime Silverman's eighty-page weekly has slightly modified the peculiar stridency of its tone since I first made its acquaintance five or six years ago. But *Variety* is still tremendously alive, with the hurried, noisy, hectic vitality of the life it sets out to reflect. Its closely printed pages, five columns to the page, present you weekly with all the news of the theatre, the movies, the talkies, the vaudeville of America in all their varied ramifications. Its outlook is strictly professional. *Variety* has no time for æsthetic speculations; you will find here no foreshadowings of that glamorous chimera, The Future of the Theatre, no theories of the apron-stage in Shakespearian production, no balancing of the cinematic theories of Pudovkin or Eisenstein. Not at all. It is a hard-boiled, practical, box-office organ, and speaks its mind in the vernacular appropriate to that point of view. Every programme and performance is examined under an expert's magnifying glass, and his judgments are delivered with no beating about the bush. They make spirited, if occasionally difficult, reading. Thus at the 58th Street vaudeville, New York:

Good bill for first half with Irene Bordoni topping and clicking with her song rep and gorgeous gown creations which provide welcome pre-Easter eye-feast for the femmes. Opening were Herbert, Geraldine and Victoria, youthful trio, two girls and boy in fast routine of acrobatics and iron jaw stuff. Trio are children of Paul Renard, one of the first to employ teeth grip stuff in vaude. Herbert handles the iron jaw feats hanging from an aerial bar and supporting another bar on which sisters do their stunts. For encore one of the girls and dad did a teeth grip spin that registered big.

And so on indefinitely, short and sharp, all in this staccato style that seems to conjure up instantaneously the crackling typewriters, the green eyeshades, the rolled shirtsleeves, the "iron jaw stuff" of the American newspaper world. The whole globe, or Europe and the Americas at least, is carefully surveyed by *Variety*, always from its peculiar angle. Its indiscreet columns teach one much about London "life" one could never learn from London's own newspapers, however specialized. But over that I draw, a little reluctantly, a veil.

QUINCUNX

## NEW NOVELS

*Tantalus*. By Jo van Ammers-Kuller. Translated from the Dutch by G. J. Renier and Irene Clephane. Cape. 7s. 6d.

*Honey-Pot*. By Clara Martin. Heath Cranton. 6s.

'**T**ANTALUS' and 'The Party Dress' supplement each other in several respects. The subject-matter of both is dealt with (on slightly different lines, of course) in the later works of Dr. Sylvanus Stall. The authoress of 'Tantalus' dissects a philandering middle-aged husband, and the author of 'The Party Dress' analyses an emotionally unstable

middle-aged wife. Our chief objection to the former book is its title. After all, Tantalus, like Ixion, was a sort of minor Prometheus, and in his spectacular agonies there was a touch of grandeur. But there is not the trace of anything even remotely approaching grandeur in the character of Evert Tideman, with his weakness for flappers and self-reproach. "He still sees love with the same eyes as when he was eighteen" explains one of his friends. And again, he is "not really a Don Juan without scruples, but a big, silly boy always chasing the same dream, always the dupe of each new illusion." In fact, with all this juvenile dream-chasing, he suggests Peter Pan rather than the Great God Pan. These pursuits are a peculiarly ridiculous spectacle because the sentimental Autolycus (if we are to find a legendary name for him, this will do as well as any) takes himself so seriously. The authoress, who is also inclined to be tremendously in earnest, brings this point out with neat but, as we suspect, unconscious humour, by telling us that, at the very moment when Evert imagines himself to be occupied with thrilling and dare-devil adventure, to the object of his passion he seems "like a man from a book by Florence Barclay." Side by side with this contrast between what he is and what he thinks he is, there is a further contrast between his Dutch stodginess and the facile waywardness of the American young ladies whom he encounters. This clash of racial temperaments is handled very effectively. Indeed, the whole novel is a very effective piece of work, constructed with the slick competence of a Ford car. The spare parts are standardized, but of excellent quality. So is the translation which, except for a few phrases, such as: "On the one occasion when they had spoken together without veils," reads like an original.

In 'Tantalus' there are merciful changes of scene from Paris to Holland and America. In 'The Party Dress' there are none. Mr. Hergesheimer illuminates with a glaring spotlight a small clique of a small American town, from which the reader is never allowed to escape. The general tone of the place is suggested by the following specimen outline of recent local history:

George Brace just fell down the stairs to the men's locker room. . . . On the concrete floor. We were having a drink below when he was carried in. Gertrude Townsend dragged Aubrey home. . . . Lena Howett's garters, it seems, have feathers, green feathers on them, and when Aubrey discovered it he was tickled to such an extent that Gertrude took him home to recover. There is more and better. Someone from town—Justin didn't know him—asked Justin Gow to have a drink out of a flask. He refused and whoever it was poured whiskey all over him. Over Justin remember; president of the Country Club and a judge and practically everything there is. He had to go home and change his shirt. This is a successful dance already.

'Honey-Pot' reads like the fictionized libretto of a musical comedy. The title is the nickname of the heroine and she has received it because, as her elderly relative, the author of the conceit, explains: "What else should I call a bonnie wee lassie, with every lad she meets a silly fly, buzzing round all agog to tumble in?" The young lady herself decides that the Master of Portdarroch, whose photograph she sees in an illustrated paper ("Grave, tall, distinguished, he stood . . . with other men in Highland dress, but he was the finest of them all and the tallest by a head") is to be her fate, for, she reflects. ". . . so long as Love *does* vincit omnia, well, I feel I shall vincit." And Love, which here assumes elementary, but not elemental, forms—*does*, after many manœuvres, complications, misunderstandings and excitements, with comic relief—duly vincit. There is a Gretna Green marriage, followed later by a proper society wedding. It is all frightfully bright and girlish.

## REVIEWS

### WHAT IS STYLE?

*A Writer's Notes on His Trade.* By C. B. Montague. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

IT is not often that, as in the 'Ars Poetica' of Horace, a first-rate hand discusses his own trade or art. So Montague's essays on the problems of writing, now available in a cheaper form, should find a wide welcome. They do not, however, go so deep into technical detail as Stevenson's 'Art of Writing,' or Sir William Watson's 'Pencraft.' They are written in an attractive style rich in happy metaphor and quotation, but were not revised by the author. In the paper on 'Quotation' he explains that he knew thoroughly only a few books, and that a range so restricted leads to a more effective use of book-learning than a wider reading. This is a strange view. Readers of many books can quote or misquote as effectively from them as Lang or Hazlitt did from a few, and the pages before us contradict the author's statement. Accurate quotation has gone out, but the wise writer still lends a charm to his prose by suggesting a well-known passage, carrying, as it were, a quotation in solution. One of the cleverest of these reminiscences is Tennyson's "Solomon-shaming flowers."

The plea for English as a growing language taking on words once thought beyond the pale is sound. The elegant Addison is mentioned as to some the last word in style, but nothing definite is said of one advance in freedom since his time. The fact is that he spoils the short sentence by balancing it with another clause which was often feeble and needless. Seneca, who began the long line of modern essayists, used it freely, but Macaulay had to revive it before it became current in English, and at present the best style is a mixture of long and short sentences. The short one summarizes and emphasizes. It supplies relief after a series of semicolons. The stop was abolished by the young Kipling in his first stories, but, when wiser and older, he returned to it.

The abuses of "literary" language, best seen in the parody of it known as "journalese" or parliamentary verbosity, are countered by the suggestion that the current vernacular may strengthen style. No one knows what style really is, but it is certain that it depends largely on the use of familiar words as well as the Latinisms which an instinct for ornament presents to the educated. The reconciliation between the written and the spoken word is always in dispute, though the licence of the present age seems to mistake foul language, which in truth means little, for forcible prose. The artist, as Schiller and others have remarked, is shown by what he omits, but here Montague protests against a frigid fidelity to bare facts which wins the praise of lucidity. Modern psychology has shown the importance of that borderland of the mind we can only suggest in vague words, the "fallings from us, vanishings" of Wordsworth's 'Ode.' Montague quotes Scott's:

I do not rhyme for that dull elf  
Who cannot image to himself,

and cannot guess how elves should be dull. It is sufficient to point to the other form of the word in English, "oaf." But we may ask if the sincere utterance of deep emotion necessarily lacks the word-music which commends less intricate themes. Some of Hardy's prose seems to hint it, but high poetry gives a different answer.



Even a few familiar words, aided by no obvious device of workmanship, can take on a compelling charm which they do not seem to deserve and which remains a phenomenon of "dazzling unreason." The examples given do not all seem happy. In Byron's:

She walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies

the word "beauty" is one that is always memorable and the second line has an evident gift of alliteration and liquids. Whatever the process by which the charm works, we feel, as Montague says, an unusual excitement. That strange and arresting thing, beauty, has been somehow achieved, and affects us as it does in fine tragedy. But there we have an emotional confidence made to us and the thrill of "contact with vital power in full flood." Nonsense about the hissing of s's has led to the foolish idea that poetry cannot bear them. But who objects when a master of style like Sophocles puts six of these hissing geese into one iambic line, and what pedant could declare that "the foam of perilous seas," with two s's meeting in different words, was badly written?

Many of these so-called rules are as shallow as the usual conception of the difference between the style of a play and a novel, here admirably cleared up by thoughtful analysis. The essay on Matthew Arnold seems rather slight, and might have been revised. While full justice is done to his writing, he is discovered to be snobbish in his social relations. That is the old criticism embodied in the description, a "kidglove Jeremiah." But a harassed school-inspector with small means might well enjoy the comfort of better-provided homes. Montague suggests this, but is too hard in his demands on human nature. Johnson, asked in a sentimental song to "smile with the simple and feed with the poor," said frankly that he preferred to "smile with the wise and feed with the rich." It is something of a paradox to describe Jowett as "the most rousing preacher in Oxford, a generation ago." Though his sermons were calculated to surprise and please young men by their worldly wisdom, they studiously avoided any display of enthusiasm.

The most outspoken of these essays are those that deal faithfully with the freakish art and writing of to-day. When you set out to represent nothing in particular you may achieve, as alienists know, results familiar in lunatic asylums. Montague insists that the artist who represents something definite is not renouncing his originality and his special gifts. Falstaff is not a mere fat man, though Shakespeare may have founded his wonderful figure on some human model. Mrs. Gamp is a tremendous creation. The title 'Doing Without Workmanship' is followed by some ludicrous examples of that skeletonic verse whose vogue is, perhaps, chiefly confined to America. The English sense of humour has pretty nearly laughed these bardlings out of court. But it is asked whether youth, because it did on the whole better than age in the war, is entitled to show us how to do it with "songs without a tune and portraits without a face." As Stevenson remarked, the business of life can be carried on with substantives alone, "but that is not what we call literature."

Machinery and mass-production may be our fate, but the artist scorns them. He works with a thrill which carries him beyond his immediate purpose. Cicero's "*esse videatur*" added little to the argument of his speeches, but he was seeking the finer rhythms of prose as well as political reputation. The excitement and ecstasy of the artist on his endless quest are part of his great reward. Words were to Montague objects of intense affection and unquenchable hope.

VERNON RENDALL

## FASCIST ITALY

*The Expansion of Italy.* By Luigi Villari. Faber. 15s.

"*Il Duce.*" By L. Kemechey. Williams and Norgate. 12s. 6d.

SIGNOR VILLARI is to be congratulated upon a book that contains much information which is not readily available elsewhere. He will, of course, be accused by the enemies of Fascism of writing as a partisan, but he is undoubtedly a patriot; and if those who do not share his views are pleased to regard the two terms as synonymous, he himself will certainly be content. The foreigner, who has seen Italy become a great power in fact as well as in name during the past eight years, will here find the secret of her enhanced prestige, while not even the most hostile critic can dispute the fact that the book is a real contribution to the study of the international politics of to-day.

The author deals with Italian activities in North Africa, in Albania and in the Near East, and he shows how closely they are connected with the growth of the population at home. He does not consider that emigration to the Americas is likely to assume any considerable proportions in the future, though, if such is the case, one wonders if it were worth Signor Mussolini's while to negotiate the agreement with Uruguay by which the latter allows dual nationality to Italian emigrants. In masterly fashion Signor Villari describes his country's need for expansion, though he is equally careful to show how she is developing to the fullest extent the few colonies that she already possesses. Indeed, the chapters which narrate the progress that is being made in this direction are, in some ways, the most interesting in the book and they show that modern Italy has set about her work in the true spirit of Rome.

From a political point of view the author's account of the situation as it exists to-day in the Trentino and Tunisia is particularly valuable. So far as the former is concerned it is clear from the evidence that the anti-Italian agitation is to a very large extent artificial and fomented from without, while Signor Villari does not hesitate to ascribe much of it to the clergy, appointed for the most part in the old Austrian days. Such being the case, the wisdom of the Lateran Treaty becomes more than ever apparent, and it may well be that as a result of it the immediate future will see a marked diminution in the intensity of Italophobe propaganda. The Tunisian problem is at once more complicated and more dangerous, for the Italian desire to preserve their nationality in that Protectorate runs counter to the old policy of France of making a good Frenchman of every stranger within her gates, whatever may have been his origin.

The book concludes with an admirable account of Albania and its monarch, in which the Italian interests in that country are succinctly stated. A great deal of nonsense has been written on this subject and Signor Villari's apt comparison of it with the position of France in Morocco is exceedingly timely and should convince even the most prejudiced of readers that Italy is not alone in casting envious eyes across the seas that wash her coasts.

M. Kemechey's work is published posthumously. The author was a Hungarian admirer of Signor Mussolini and he has written a panegyric of the latter in the form of a biography. His book contains nothing that is new, but all the same it deserves a wide public, for it is written in a style that impresses the personality and the dynamic energy of the Fascist leader upon the reader in a way in which no previous writer has done. The translator, Miss Magda Vamos, has admirably preserved the spirit of the original.

CHARLES PETRIE

## T. E. BROWN

*T. E. Brown: A Memorial Volume.* Cambridge University Press. 10s.

TO many people this volume, issued on the centenary of the birth of T. E. Brown, will give an opportunity of studying a poet known to them only through anthologies. It was in this state of curiosity, and in a mood of one ready to make amends, that I opened the book, for it so happened that Brown was the author of a poem, to which every anthologist succumbs, which was one of my favourite aversions. A prejudice should be confessed frankly, and if I had to name the three familiar poems that I dislike most, Mr. Kipling's 'If' would be the first, 'Abou Ben Adhem' the second, and Brown's 'My Garden' the third. To waste energy on one's dislikes has never been a temptation to me, but these three poems will thrust themselves upon our notice, and their authors have to suffer from a repetition which is no fault of theirs. The other poems of Brown that have similarly been detached did not dispel my disenchantment, and the news that his centenary was to be commemorated in a volume to which Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Sir Hall Caine and Sir Henry Newbolt had helped to contribute, offered a welcome chance to reconsider an opinion that did not pretend to be judicial.

When we ask who was T. E. Brown and why his memory should be cherished with the evident sincerity displayed in this book, the answer is not difficult, but it is scarcely a literary one. A son of the Isle of Man who wrote metrical tales in the Anglo-Manx dialect, and, after a brilliant but unhappy career at Oxford, became a master at Clifton, where most of his life was spent, has clearly two strong local claims to remembrance. The Island is naturally proud of the distinguished scholar who was devoted to its beauty and traditions, and the public school of a master whose reputation beyond its walls helped to justify the deep impression that he had made upon many generations of schoolboys. The fourteen contributors divide themselves into those primarily interested in Brown's relation to the Isle of Man and into those who celebrate the work that he did as a Clifton schoolmaster. All, moreover, agree that the most significant feature of the man was the spell which he cast on those with whom he came in contact. A glance at the photograph taken of him in his Clifton days does much to justify their claims to outsiders. The dignity and humour of the broad, square face, the gleam in the eyes, the mixture of strength and geniality, are captivating, and his talk, we are told, with its whimsicality, its sudden extremes of sentiment or parody, was exhilarating. He was able unconsciously to impress people with a sense of depth and reserve of power, and these may well have been there even though they found, I think, an inadequate expression in his writings. The impression left by this book, which contains some letters not included in his collected correspondence, together with the hymns that he contributed to the Clifton College Hymn Book, is that his verses have provided the occasion, but that, if Brown had never written a line of verse, to those who knew him this centenary of his birth would have seemed equally worth commemoration.

The Memoir provided by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch contains a piece of literary criticism that, no doubt, explains a good deal: "I could pray that fate, reversing its wheel, had permitted Brown to pour out all the lyric that must have sung within him in early youth. . . almost all the songs into which Brown put his heart were written in middle age or toward its close. That, as it seems to me, is the key to him. Repressed in youth; engaged to work for his 'classes' at Oxford; afterwards engaged at Clifton on the daily round, the common task; he found his release too late." This explanation is inviting, and,

if it be true, it would imply that poetry was a constituent and not the foundation of his nature. He seems to have been a medley of conflicting qualities; his taste, which implies balance, was uncertain, and he belonged to the age of Clough, to the atmosphere of muscular Christianity, in which spiritual integrity and health were almost impossible. It was only after considerable delay that he took priest's Orders, and he confessed that his daily round and his inner life had to run on separate paths. Since sincerity was natural to him, he was not happy in this distinction, and the consequence was that the two would sometimes collide in public, and people would become shocked or amused by a sudden lapse from one plane to the other. Admittedly, he has his niche, and the double appeal to Cliftonians and to Manxmen will ensure that the strain of poetry in T. E. Brown will never want for remembrance.

OSBERT BURDETT

## TERRORS OF THE PACIFIC

*Pearl Diver.* By V. Berge and H. W. Lanier. Heinemann. 10s. 6d.

THIS book is of outstanding merit for three reasons. In the first place the subject-matter depicts an aspect of the real pearling industry which nobody has ever dealt with before. Secondly, the first-hand experiences and life history of the man who sought his vocation the world over until he found it on the bed of the Pacific, are written in a virile, straightforward style characteristic of the self-made man which endears him at once to his reader.

The third reason, though by no means the least important one, is the very rare feat accomplished by the editor-author, Mr. Lanier, of effacing himself and successfully vesting his pen with the personality of another. In his brief but entertaining preface, in which we are introduced to the Swedish pearler, he speaks of how he squeezed the latter dry of everything he had to tell by means of a pleasant third-degree method extending over three weeks, of which forty hours were devoted to transcribing verbatim the author's own recital.

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To what extent the subject-matter is unique will be appreciated when it is realized that a white pearl diver is almost unknown, and that by the time he was a mere boy of eighteen, Victor Berge had obtained experiences in three or four diverse forms of livelihood, as a runaway boy with the police on his track; a newsboy; alternately crew and deserter of hard-case wind-jammers which landed him, first in South Africa, as a tramp and amateur ostrich hunter, and later in Australia, where he made a small fortune out of ring-barking and possum-trapping. It remained for him to dissipate this wealth, until a forced renewal of the urge to discover his appointed niche in the scheme of things made him a stowaway in a Chinese pearling lugger, bound from Surabaya to Banda. Here the Chinese skipper, who befriended him, afforded him access to a set of modern diving gear, acquired from an abandoned pearl lugger. That such an artifice of Western ingenuity was a puzzle to the Eastern mind, albeit a shrewd realization that its disuse represented a buried talent, is not surprising. But that a Swedish country lad, with hardly more than a light smattering of education, should have been able in a few days to recondition and ferret out the technicalities of a modern diver's suit of which he had never even guessed the existence, is remarkable enough to be readily discredited as a tall yarn by those unaccustomed to accepting the fact that truth is often stranger than fiction. The reader will agree that this continues to be amply borne out in almost every phase of the author's life here depicted, from the discovery of his lucky pearl (one chance in 100), through his adventures with shark and octopus, his self-taught profession of expert steeplejack, his presence at an actual cannibal feast in the heart of hostile Malaita, to his last colourful interlude as an African cattle farmer.

Beside such breathless episodes, his romance of love and marriage (that pivot so necessary to the writer of fiction) seems as small an affair to the reader as it is to the author. There are those who take such an event in their stride like a draught of wine; who are wedded to life rather than an individual and whose playground is the earth rather than any one spot upon it.

### A MIXED GRILL

*A Mixed Grill: A Medley in Retrospect.* By the Author of 'A Garden of Peace.' Hutchinson. 21s.

THE gossips are generally sure of a welcome, if they are induced by the constraint of print to give form and terseness to their stories. Every properly constituted mortal loves to hear detailed intimacies about other people, provided the narration is not drawn out to boring lengths, and has some quality of humour or surprise about it. We spend a good deal of our life talking about other people, and lively newspapers have long exploited the interest to be got out of the lives and doings of all and sundry in the world's eye. Only recently one of our gifted gossip writers in the Press, in a spirited address on his craft to the Institute of Journalists, explained the *modus operandi* of keeping one's social friends, despite some freedom in the criticism or chronicle of their lives—and it did not differ much from the ways of political journalists in dealing with statesmen.

The author of the latest book of gossip, 'A Mixed Grill,' desires to affect anonymity, though contributing in a frontispiece a portrait of himself in a rather cluttered corner of his Italian home, by which his friends will be able to recognize him. He confesses to a passion for detail, for desultory reminiscence, and a

tendency to digression, none of which disqualify him for success in this particular walk, if the product is diverting, as it is. He began life as a journalist in the provinces, but soon discovered a gift, not only of verse, but of story writing, and when after a time he found that he could reel off short and long stories with what will seem to the uninstructed an amazing facility, he took his courage in his hands and embarked on the world of London as an author. He found many doors open to him, many interesting friends to welcome him and accumulated a fund of anecdote and comment in connexion with the prominent figures in the world of letters, art and the stage during the last thirty or forty years.

His modest conquest of this London world, this "promised land" and his pleasant surprise that it should open its doors to him, remind one a little of Daudet's similar attempt on Paris as a young *littérateur* with some poems to his credit. It is plain that to our author men of letters walk the earth like gods, though in a few preliminary anecdotes he shows his consciousness that there is a vast world outside these favoured circles where such prophets have no honour. The reply of a modish girl at the dinner table to a man with "a mountainous brow" who had incautiously mentioned the word literature, is worth mention: "Literature? Of course, yes. That's the part of a book that a reader skips." But lest authors should be unduly crestfallen, there are several warnings to men of other professions. The way of a doctor with a journalist touches a Fleet Street chord. This was a special correspondent, who, after an urgent time with Kitchener in the Sudan, was hustled off to the Klondyke, and on his return found himself so shaky that he went to Harley Street, where he acknowledged himself a journalist. "I guessed as much," said the doctor. "What you need is fresh air. The sedentary

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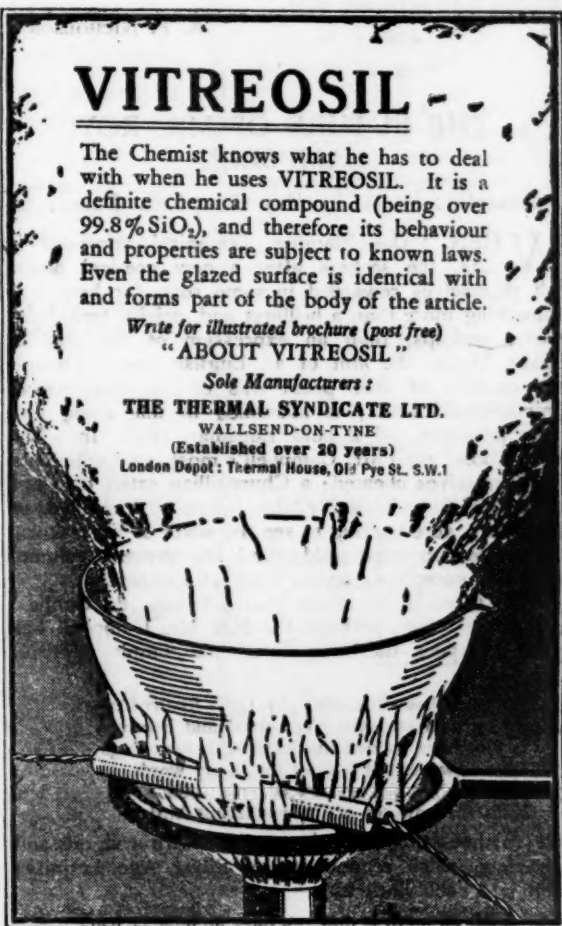
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occupation of a writer must be balanced by occasional activity out of doors—a fortnight at Margate.” Critics may take to heart the story of William Archer, who at the first night of a play at the Garrick Theatre praised the producers for playing one scene in semi-darkness—a fine idea, very subtle and suggestive. The next day the theatre sent an apology to the newspapers for the temporary failure of the lights on the first night, and the scene was played like the others.

Now that the wind of popular favour is beginning to veer away from the crowding war novels, it is interesting to remember past changes in fashion. We are reminded here of the waxing and waning of the Kailyard school, fostered so long by Dr. Robertson Nicholl. Many novelists are etched in. To one the author is evidently deeply attached, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Incidentally, he gives his evidence that Sir Arthur was seriously interested in spiritualist manifestations in 1901—this in reply to supposititious detractors who might suppose this interest was taken up when Sherlock Holmes had lost his pristine appeal. Among others there is a great deal about Irving and Ellen Terry, and the losing game played out at the Lyceum. The long procession that passes before us includes Carl Rosa, Mrs. Langtry, Henry James, Sargent, Edwin Booth, Adelina Patti and George Alexander, which justifies the title.

The author takes a big risk at the end of the book. He winds up some Irish anecdotes with a story of a New Ireland banquet at which the *Sole à la Marseillaise* was found to be tripe, and adds: “Well, in the ‘ould’ days, trout was trout, sole was sole and tripe was tripe.” That is the last line and it might be taken by a reader as the opportunity for a devastating quip. I hasten to say that this author, who veils his identity with his photograph, has produced a book of reminiscences which is far from being tripe; on the contrary, it abounds with interesting stories and is written with agreeable ease.

A. P. NICHOLSON

## THE FUTURE OF MR. ROY CAMPBELL

*Adamastor: Poems by Roy Campbell.* Faber. 5s.

WHEN ‘The Flaming Terrapin’ appeared in 1924, the seekers after a new poetical planet felt themselves rewarded in some sort, for here was something more than a brilliant and incisive technique, more, perhaps, than an expression of the soul of South Africa, the *hint* of an English poet. Though the content of that poem was of the dithyrambic unintellectual order, it abounded in fine lines, and even passages, of a bold Lucanian cast. In ‘The Wayzgoose’ even Mr. Campbell’s most loyal adherents felt themselves cheated; a Churchillian satire on Cape personalities was hardly the follow-up expected of him; they were waiting to see the silver of his rhetoric transmuted to pure gold: and the present volume, with one exception, leaves them still expectant.

Now there is no doubt that ‘Tristan da Cunha’ is a noble thing, perhaps the best Mr. Campbell has given us yet; the idea is of the simplest, *poetic isolation*:

My pride has sunk, like your grey fissured crags,  
By its own strength o’ertopped and betrayed:  
I, too, have burned the wind with fiery flags  
Who now am but a roost for empty words,  
An island of the sea whose only trade  
Is in the voyages of its wandering birds.

For 102 lines this theme is amplified with a vigour and a variety which remind one of Silver Age Latinity; there are such lines as:

Your strength is that you have no hope or fear,

and:

The winds are undulations in your flight;

The rhyme sounds are subtle, and the restraint never breaks down: but there is no other poem in this book of which the same can be said.

The next best, *longo intervallo*, is ‘The Palm,’ a metrical caprice, where the shape and swaying of the tree is suggested by a sequence of internal chimes:

Your spirit that grieves like the wind in my leaves  
Shall be robbed of its care by those whispering thieves  
To study my patience and hear, the day long,  
The soft foliations of sand into song—

Only in these two poems is the author completely himself; in the others he is School of Churchill, Baudelaire and Rimbaud. What a difference! In ‘The Zulu Girl’ (five four-line stanzas), both ‘La Géante’ and ‘Les Chercheuses de poux’ are copied, the former almost literally; Baudelaire’s ‘Albatross’ has four stanzas, Mr. Campbell’s, thirty-three; and on p. 35 there is a clever conflation of ‘Fêtes de la Faim’ and ‘Comédie de la Soif’; while his ‘Veld Eclogue’ is hardly more than the exercise of a sardonic mind that has just enjoyed ‘The Prophecy of Famine.’ The gift of vivid phrase never deserts him, however, or rarely; ‘Insomnia, the Muse of Angry Men,’ is an example. But anger, *indignatio*, alone cannot make an English poet.

If Mr. Campbell means to do better than he has done and not travel by the same path as D. H. Lawrence, he must temper his spleen with ideas. An odd recrudescence of Byronism!

There is no sea so wide, no waste so sterile  
But holds a rapture for the sons of strife.

The poet is the “restive steer” who “heads each hot stampede,” a “monstrous changeling” and “the matador of truth.” We do not need to go to the ‘Fleurs du Mal’ for that aspect of fact, those of us who know our Peacock, at least. When, in ‘Poets in Africa’ one reads:

And it is sweet at times to hear,  
Out of the turf we trod,  
Hysterical with pain and fear,  
The blood of Abel screech to God.

the mind travels back to Mr. Cypress’s:

There is a fever of the spirit,  
The brand of Cain’s unresting doom.

Rimbaud could escape that particular pitfall; Mr. Campbell has escaped it, and others, in ‘Tristan da Cunha’: he should, however, think better of his readers than to give them, in his ‘Satirical Fragments,’ a limerick that was served up two years ago in ‘The Wayzgoose.’

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

## ARCHÆOLOGISTS AND THE ARK

*The Flood.* By Harold Peake. Kegan Paul. 5s.

“THERE are,” writes Professor Peake in the final sentence of his survey of recent archaeological discoveries, “still problems to be solved regarding the Flood.” There are indeed. The Flood owes its interest to the modern world to the prominence given to it in the Jewish scriptures. We know now that the Jews took the story over from the Babylonians who took it over in turn from the Sumerians—a people of still mysterious origin who appear to have entered Mesopotamia from across the sea. Why were the Jews so interested in something which they got at secondhand? Archæology cannot yet answer that question. What it can say is that the flood was a real and, indeed, overwhelming catastrophe for Ur, the city with which the Jews are associated at the beginning of their history. That



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matter, at least, has been put beyond doubt by the work done last year by Mr. Leonard Woolley. He has himself described how he drove pits down beyond the graves in which he had found his sensational evidence of a highly developed civilization earlier than any hitherto known in Mesopotamia. The pits were driven through pottery till they struck clay. The instinct that sometimes inspires archæologists led Mr. Woolley to push his pits on through the clay—through eight solid feet of it. Then he came upon more pottery.

That thick belt of clay was deposited by flood water which overwhelmed Ur. It appears, however, that terrible though the inundation must have been, its effect was mainly local. For, by an interesting coincidence, parallel excavations were made almost simultaneously at Kish. They revealed not one belt of clay but three, and none of those three very wide. It is all still quite mysterious. The Kish floods are intelligible. They are of a type that occur in Mesopotamia to this day. The Ur flood is exceptional. Further, the difficulty at Kish and still more, of course, at Ur, is not the evidence of flood but the comparative lack of it. Why, at Ur, only this one belt and then no more until the excavators reached virgin sand? Professor Peake throws out a suggestion. There may have been a last advance of the retreating ice in the Armenian mountains. It is quite a plausible explanation, but there remains the difference, at present unexplained, between the three floods at Kish and the one flood at Ur.

On the other hand we now know something about the people who lived at Ur before the flood. Their pottery has affinities with the pottery found in great quantities by M. Jacques de Morgan underneath Susa, the later capital of the Persian Great Kings. It was made on a wheel of a buff clay richly decorated with black ornament. There is a fine collection of this

ware in the Louvre. Its makers, so their graves tell us, were acquainted with agriculture and equipped their warriors with copper axes. Their culture, as represented by their pots, extends up into the Persian highlands as well as down into Mesopotamia. It is possible that the sand which overlay their settlement at Susa was deposited not by desert winds but by a flood. There, for the present, we must leave it.

## SHORTER NOTICES

*Brain.* By Lionel Britton. Putnam. 5s.

WHEN this play was recently performed by one of those private societies which give what is euphemistically called the non-commercial drama its first and often last chance, most of the critics pointed out that the author had no theatre sense. Seeing that his theme is nothing less than the Cosmos and the Fate of Humanity, a subject for which even the Drury Lane stage would be a little on the small side, the objection seems unreasonable; but it may be conceded that 'Brain' probably reads better than it plays. There is something of the stupendous in the conception of humanity having perfected its mechanistic society, and ending by eliminating itself by its failure to cope with the cosmos; and the novelty of the idea—or is it the absence of a leading lady from the cosmic cast—appears to have bewildered the critics. The lack of human interest deprives the play of any title to be called drama, and the plot is unduly compressed. But as an experiment the play is an extraordinarily interesting piece of work, and the author should go far—though not necessarily as a dramatist.

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*Stravinsky's Sacrifice in Apollo.* By Eric Walter White. Hogarth Press. 6s.

ABUSIVE taunts and effusive praises have been in general the comments on Stravinsky's music for a good many years now, and this book, with its carefully considered judgments, should go a long way towards counteracting destructive exaggerations and understatements. Constructive discussions and controversy, on the other hand, may easily result from it, and will also go far towards answering the complaint of Stravinsky himself that unreasoned criticism of his work has come largely from England. Mr. White is sympathetic to the composer without being a partisan, and he discusses all the important works in detail, and in a reasoned manner. He does not venture a final prophecy of the composer's place in the Hall of Fame, being content to wait before this is done for future developments of the direction the composer has recently taken, but he certainly does not share with many people the conviction that the death of Diaghilev will mean the death of Stravinsky's music.

*Economic Aspects of Sovereignty.* By R. G. Hawtrey. Longmans. 9s.

INTERNATIONAL agreements are easily arrived at on matters outside political controversy. Could we not extend this international action to vital controversial issues by creating a "supernational sovereign" authority? Mr. Hawtrey does not deal with the constitution and powers of this body, nor does he tell us how its decisions are to be enforced, but he suggests that it might be established by the public opinion of the world.

He considers that most wars are caused by economic strife and supports the theory by reference to the history of numerous conflicts. If these economic struggles could be removed the cause of peace would be greatly assisted. The tribunal would not have to be guided by questions of right and wrong, but solely by expediency, as right would very frequently be enforcing the terms of a peace which had become intolerable. And as countries grow stronger in unequal degrees this sovereign authority would have to deal with some big problems. Racial and economic boundaries rarely coincide.

Mr. Hawtrey considers there is room for enormous economic development of our territories, and suggests that there should be a consistent policy, to try to counteract the lack of initiative which is always shown by our governments. But while individual nations should make the most of their opportunities, it would be of material assistance to everyone if a supernational authority could be evolved. Unrestricted individualism would have been intolerable in national life. We have solved the problem of a national sovereign: we now need an international sovereign.

*Sober Truth.* Compiled by Margaret Barton and Osbert Sitwell. Duckworth. 12s. 6d.

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Douglas Home, Jack the Ripper, Brigham Young and Joanna Southcote—whose mysterious box had to be opened by a bishop before even the materialistic twentieth century could be quite disillusioned about her powers. Many of these personalities and incidents are simply "exhibited," without comment, by reproduction of contemporary records. Others, more recondite, and not so often resurrected and examined—such as the identity of Eleazar Williams with Louis XVII—are explained by the editors, whose aim in making this collection, briefly indicated above, is fully expounded by Mr. Osbert Sitwell in an illuminating and often subtly ironical preface. If some Victorians are a little disturbed by, even a little resentful of, the avowed object of this anthology—"to undermine the current estimate of the last century and to place it in public opinion upon quite a different pedestal"—Georgians will find it an entertaining mirror of those "good old days." Some of the things seen in it seem now as fantastic as our own figures in those distorting mirrors which were among the laughter-making devices of such Victorian delights as the Crystal Palace.

*The Meaning of Money.* Fifth Edition. By Hartley Withers. Murray. 6s.

SINCE Mr. Withers's tremendously popular book first appeared over twenty years ago much water has flowed under the financial bridges. The golden sovereign has disappeared, the Governor of the Bank of England no longer retires at the end of two years' service, and London is not now the unchallenged monetary centre of the world. In view of these, and many other, changes, a really up-to-date edition of 'The Meaning of Money' was most necessary, and students and general readers must be grateful to Mr. Withers for providing it. Anyone who wishes to gain an insight into everyday finance cannot possibly do better than start with this revised version of a book which has enlightened and charmed many thousands of beginners.

*St. John.* By the Rev. Edward Mears. Murray. 7s. 6d.

THE author of this work deals in a candid and courageous way with the Fourth Gospel, which he holds was written by a disciple of Christ who lived in Jerusalem, and not by St. John the Apostle. In support of this view (which seems to be gaining ground) he brings forward evidence both from the Gospel itself, and also from the writings of some of the early Fathers of the Church. It will certainly come to some as a startling surprise to be told that the author of the Gospel composed most of the Discourses himself and wove them around some well remembered actual sayings of his Master. In respect to the miracles (or signs) recorded in this Gospel the author appears to think that the difficulties about accepting them as historical facts will gradually be overcome when more is known about mental and spiritual healing.

*The Secret of the Creek.* By Victor Bridges. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

MR. BRIDGES takes us once more to the Essex coast with its waterways and yachts, hearty inn-keepers and rascally villains. There is a hidden treasure of plate, not quite so old as the detective who examined it said by some five centuries, a cipher on the back of the title page of a seventeenth-century book which gives a clue to its hiding place, a youthful heroine, last of her family, and the hero and his friend. The chase for the cipher runs through the book and the villain gets it in the end, only to be hoist with his own petard. An excellent story.

*The Future of Empire and the World Price of Peace.* By William Harbutt Dawson. Williams and Norgate. 12s. 6d.

THE good points of both the British Empire and the League of Nations are rarely appreciated by one man, although their problems are closely intertwined. Mr. Dawson is one of these rarities. But in spite of the title of his book he soon reveals that his major interest is in attaining a lasting world peace, and he realizes that no effort yet made has really attacked the root of the problem. War is still the only real method of altering the *status quo*, apart from Article XIX of the Covenant which he does not consider even worthy of mention. And the problem is an urgent one: by 1935 Italy will be forced to find an outlet for her population, while Germany and other countries will not take much longer to reach a similar position. Supporters of the League of Nations will find one chapter devoted to a stimulating criticism of its activities; while those whose interests lie in the Empire will find many vital problems dealt with, such as the lack of news from the Dominions in the English Press.

*The Havering Plot.* By Richard Keverne. Constable. 3s. 6d.

THE vogue for deprecating an affection for detective stories is dying out. It is now possible, openly and unashamedly, to confess to a liking for this type of literature. One is glad of this since it removes all cause of embarrassment from those enthralled readers who hover round the bookshelves of detective fiction. They should discover Richard Keverne's latest story to be fatally attractive. It is a post-war spy story in which human interest, good writing and hard thinking are not missing. Such qualities in a detective novel serve to deaden the reader's consciousness of a crude desire for thrills. Mr. Keverne



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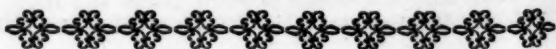
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*The Swift Years.* By George Stevenson. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

IT is no display of inconsistency to advise people to read this book and, in the same breath, to tell them that it is the mean little story of a mean little boy who grows into a mean little man. Why? Because there are mean little boys and men in this world and the story of their mean little lives is quite worth reading. The author of 'The Swift Years' has been much too clever to be blatantly the historian of a small-natured youth. There are only two ways of proving that his hero, Anthony Redgold, was small-natured. One is by comparing him with his selfless mother, and the other is by intelligently setting him beside his (not necessarily contemporary) betters. He comes out cutting a sorry figure. But if he deserves to be despised he also merits that charitable consideration that grows out of humanitarian principles. He is no criminal, no half-wit and no hero. He is merely a poor-grade citizen, not forceful enough to be a home-breaker but quite capable of being a heart-breaker.

*A Wise Man Foolish.* By H. T. Hopkinson. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

BEHIND the tightly shut cottage windows of the most idyllic looking English village there may be jealousy and cruelty and intrigue and gross superstition. So in this story of the Dales country parish to which young John Crome came as the new vicar, to find himself embroiled in village feuds, giving offence to powerful parishioners and even becoming rival to a village swain. There is a thread of plot, and the story comes to an unexpectedly tragic climax. But in this sort of story character and atmosphere count for more than plot, and here they are well enough done to mark this out as an unusually promising first novel. For readers who like stories of country life it is a safe choice for the library list.

*Meadows of Youth.* By Tobins King. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

A PLEASANT and promising first novel, about a pair of twins, Toni and Dandy, brother and sister, and both very natural and likeable youngsters. Toni, an unsophisticated and unconventional girl if ever there was one, is perhaps the more likeable of the two. Dandy is sometimes rather more of a cub than his literary creator knows. We see them first as childish rebels against the rule of a harsh and intolerant and narrow-minded aunt; then growing up, sharing holidays abroad and the tremendous adventure of setting up for themselves in rooms in town, and of course falling in love—neither of them very happily. Some of the characterization, of their artist friend Nicholas, of the girl who spoils Dandy's peace of mind, is rather conventional. But in an age of too sophisticated fiction, this novel, almost naïve and old-fashioned in its simplicity, is very readable and really rather refreshing.

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*The Golden Isle.* By Dorothy M. Fisk. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

IN the Golden Isle, which is Majorca, there lives Margaret Peacock, who ought to have been married to a man killed in the war, but wasn't, and her small son Kit. To the Golden Isle there comes Dr. George Moreton, an Englishman whose brother Brian was also killed in the war. Of course, George falls in love with Margaret and Kit would willingly have such a jolly playmate in place of the father he never knew. But that, of course, would be too simple. Hence the complications caused by Margaret's glimpse of a photograph in George's pocket book and George's puzzlement over the rejection of his honourable addresses. The wise novel reader will guess whose photograph it was and the real name of Margaret's war-time husband—and will foresee the happy ending. A trite little tale; but those who have been to Majorca will enjoy it for its vivid pictures of that fortunate island, and will count the setting better than the story.

*The Bridle of Pegasus.* By W. R. Dawson. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

PEGASUS was tamed by Bellerophon because the goddess gave him a magic bridle, hence the name of this book, which is a study of magic, mythology and folklore. For example, the author tells the legend of the harpies with the usual explanation of it, he then shows that the flying-fox bats are probably the origin of the story, and finally follows out the history of bats in literature and folk-lore, more especially of their use in folk-medicine. Nose-rubbing, mouse-eating, the hoopoe, medical botany, and the use of mummies as a drug, make equally interesting subjects for study, and the book closes with a valuable bibliography of works quoted or referred to. The book is interesting throughout.

*Artists in String.* By Kathleen Haddon. Methuen. 6s.

CATS' cradles have been a joy to children from time immemorial, but it is only within the last thirty years or so that ethnologists and others have begun to make some study of them. All over the world this game of making figures out of a long piece of string looped over the fingers of both hands and cunningly passed from one to the other has been found, and the resulting figures have been given names suggested by the main lines of the design. A method of recording these figures was devised by two students, one of them the father of our author, and here we have a collection of specimens from all over the world—North and South America, Africa, Australia, Oceania, and the Oceanic fringe of Eastern Asia, from which the game was probably introduced into Europe. Our author's conclusion is that many of the string figures found, especially in Polynesia, illustrate legends and myths now lost, and, indeed, have a magical significance. She insists that the time is now ripe for a comprehensive study of this interesting topic. In the meantime, people who are clever with their fingers have here a fascinating new game.

*The Standing Crosses of Herefordshire.* By Alfred Watkins. Simpkin Marshall. 10s.

THIS is a book which should be bought by everyone who takes any interest in the antiquities of the country. Mr. Watkins has photographed every standing cross in the county of Herefordshire of which any vestige is left, he has given a list of them and of every church site in the county, with a full description of the cross, and a deplorable list of vanished crosses, and finishes with a list of consecration crosses, doorway crosses (on the south door of the church) and others. There are still 120 stand-

ing crosses in the county, of which 103 are churchyard crosses and four are market crosses. Mr. Watkins has collected a mass of material as to the early history of these monuments, which in many cases lie in alinement along ancient tracts, and are often built over or converted from menhiers or boulders of unworked stone. The Bishop of Hereford, who writes a short commendation of the book, is well within the mark when he calls it "an accurate, exhaustive and interesting record of the Old Standing Crosses of the County."

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## ACROSTICS

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 427

Last of our 31st Quarter

(CLOSING DATE: First post Thursday, May 29)

PRIMEVAL DARKNESS, CHAOS' ANCIENT LORD.

A SUBJECT FOR THIS RIDDLE WILL AFFORD.

"Sable-vested Night, eldest of things."—Milton.

N.B. There are alternative spellings of Lights 6 and 10.

1. My study's Man, 'twould please our POPE to find.
2. Head under wing when blows this wintry wind.
3. Thrives best when trampled on, of old they said.
4. "Fish-lizards," lengthy dragons long since dead.
5. If this Light gravel you 'twill not be odd.
6. One half of Hebrew consecrate to God.
7. His "fearful symmetry" what hand dared frame?
8. Curtail. (Abate it! All shall praise, none blame.)
9. Apt for your owl to sit in and look wise.
10. With Ireland gone, this plant our need supplies.
11. From Onalaska's shore the wolf's they hear.
12. A cloth with little in it. Melrose near.

## PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

The firms whose names are printed on the Competition Coupon offer a Weekly Prize in our Acrostic Competition—a book reviewed, at length or briefly, in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the acrostic appears.

## RULES

1. The book must be chosen when the solution is sent.
2. It must be published by a firm in the list on the coupon, its price must not exceed a guinea, and it must not be one of an edition sold only in sets.
3. The coupon for the week must be enclosed.
4. Envelopes must be marked "Acrostic" and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.
5. Solutions must reach us not later than the Thursday following the date of publication.
6. Ties will be decided by lot.

## Solution of Acrostic No. 425

T rot H 1 Gen. xxxv. 18, and note in margin of  
O ratori O R.V.  
M ammot H 2 Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, son of Llewelyn  
C apercailli E the Great, was defeated and killed by Edward I.  
Arithmetician N in 1282.  
M amma L 3 *Lythrum Salicaria*, Purple Loosestrife,  
P atchoul I grows on river banks, and sends up tall,  
B enjami N 4 tapering spikes of purple flowers.—Chambers's  
E dwar D 5 20th Century Dictionary says that the man-  
L oosestrif E 6 *ærchis* is Long-purples; but the Mari-  
L eadsma N Orchis has greenish-yellow flowers and grows  
in dry places.

ACROSTIC No. 425.—The winner is Mrs. J. Butler, 172 Rosendale Road, S.E.21, who has selected as her prize 'The Town of Tombarrel,' by W. J. Locke, published at The Bodley Head and reviewed by us on May 10. Seventeen other competitors named this book, twenty-seven chose 'Bar and Buskin,' ten 'Modern Canada,' etc.

ALSO CORRECT.—Ali, Armadale, E. Barrett, Boskerris, Mrs. Robert Brown, Carlton, Ceyx, Coque, Dolmar, Ursula D'Oit, Farsdon, Fossil, T. Hartland, Iago, Jeff, A. M. W. Maxwell, Shorwell, St. Ives, Mrs. Daphne Touche, C. J. Warden, Capt. W. R. Wolseley, Zyk.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—A. E., A. de V. Blathwayt, Boote, Miss Carter, J. Chambers, Clam, J. R. Cripps, Maud Crowther, Dhualt, Sir Reginald Egerton, Gay, Glamis, Jop, Met, George W. Miller, Lady Mottram, N. O. Sellam, Peter, F. M. Petty, M. C. S. Scott, Turkin, Tyro, H. M. Vaughan.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—A. V. R., Bolo, Boris, Buns, Chailey, Chip, D. L., Miss Kelly, Lillian, Madge, Martha, Mrs. Milne, H. de R. Morgan, Margaret Owep, Rabbits, Rho Kappa. All others more.

Light 6 baffled 36 competitors; Light 3, 14; Light 11, 8; Light 10, 5; Light 9, 3; Light 7, 2.

ACROSTIC No. 424.—Two Lights wrong: Glamis.

RABBITS.—Yes, for the Weekly Competition, not for the Quarterly.

BOSKERRIS.—"At present" means that before Mammals existed Reptiles predominated. You remember the wonderful lines in Tennyson's *Maud*:

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,  
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.  
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:  
He now is first, but is he the last?

IAGO.—The only question is, what plant Shakespeare had in mind. "Fossil" kindly informs me that in Britton and Holland's

'English Plant Names' *Long-purples* is said to mean the Purple Loosestrife, which agrees with my own conjecture.

SISYPHUS.—You have totally misinterpreted my remarks, no doubt because, trying to be brief, I became, like Horace, obscure. My letter will, I hope, convince you that I am not the "harbitorary gent" you suppose. Please give me another trial!

ST. IVES.—Nobody was penalized for mis-spelling *Araucaria* in No. 425, or *Wistaria* in No. 421. You omitted to fill in Light 7, and I could not accept L.....C, could I?

COQUE.—You will find *Seagull* in 'Johnson's Dictionary,' with quotations from Bacon and Mortimer. I don't think there are any *land mews*. Our *mew* is the German *möwe*, which means, according to the 'Imp. Dict.,' "a mew or sea-gull."

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## THE CITY

*Lombard Street, Thursday*

THE principal interest in the stock markets continues to be focused on the many new issues. Borrowers naturally consider that a period of cheap money is the right moment to appeal for finance, with the result that during recent weeks a large number of new issues have been made. Unfortunately, the majority of them have received disappointing receptions. The Bank Rate, admittedly, is standing at a low level, but investors are chary of applying for new issues unless they are convinced as to the attractions of the offer.

A striking contrast to the reception afforded to new issues was presented last Monday when dealings started in the recently issued Imperial Japanese Government  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Conversion Loan and the new L.C.C.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Loan. From the moment the terms of the Japanese Loan were known, its success was guaranteed. Japanese loans have always been popular. Japanese credit stands high in this country, and those responsible seem intent on making their issues really attractive, with the result that applicants for Japanese  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cents. received only 10 per cent. of their applications, and the loan opened a good market in the neighbourhood of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  premium. It is suggested that at anything up to 2 premium, this loan is well worth buying to lock away for investment purposes.

Turning to the L.C.C. Loan, this was a  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. issue at 95 per cent., an unattractive level, and, although the stock is naturally a thoroughly sound safety-first investment, no surprise was caused by the fact that underwriters were left to take up  $62\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the issue and that dealings opened at  $\frac{3}{4}$  discount. While, admittedly, a borrower obtains all the capital he requires once his loan is underwritten, it is in his interests as a potential future borrower for his issues to be popular and for dealings to open at a premium. The harm that is permanently done to a borrower who makes an unattractive offer foredoomed to failure is difficult to gauge, but it is undoubtedly considerable, and it is suggested that it is unfortunate that so important a body as the London County Council did not realize the psychological effect their recent failure is likely to have on their future issues.

## OIL SHARES

During the past year the attention of readers of these notes has on several occasions been drawn to the encouraging outlook for the oil share market. Had it not been for the Wall Street crash last year, in all probability we should have had considerable activity in this section. As it is, it has remained somewhat neglected for a long period, although share values have not shown that violent depreciation experienced in most sections of the Stock Exchange. The dividend announcements made last week supply the justification for the optimistic views expressed as to oil shares during the last year, as they clearly indicate that the companies concerned must have made very excellent progress. In view of general depression, the oil share market appears the most likely centre to look for profitable bull transactions during

the next few months, and, in these circumstances, to-day attention is drawn to certain of the leading counters in this market.

## SHELLS

First and foremost, attention is again drawn to the £1 ordinary shares of the Shell Transport and Trading Company Limited. The declaration last week of a final dividend of 15 per cent., free of tax, making 25 per cent., free of tax, which is the same scale as for the three previous years, emphasizes the attractions of these shares at the present level. Although the dividend for 1929 is at the same rate as for 1928, in view of the increase in the ordinary share capital as the result of the issue made in January 1929, the distribution calls for an additional £1,000,000, not including the comparatively small further amount required by reason of the final dividend being paid this year free of tax at 4s. 6d. in the pound as compared with 4s. last year. Shells appear a thoroughly sound and suitable investment for all classes of investors.

Those who do not favour the risk involved in purchasing an ordinary share should not overlook the fact that the recently issued Shell 7 per cent. second preference shares are procurable at a premium of a few pence over their issue price of 25s., at which level, in view of the exceptional security offered, they appear a thoroughly desirable investment.

## BRITISH MATCH CORPORATION

The chairman of the British Match Corporation Limited had a pleasing tale of progress to unfold at the recent meeting, inasmuch as the profits for the year ended April 30 last denote a satisfactory increase as compared with the previous year. The shares of this corporation appear thoroughly suitable for permanent investment purposes. It will be remembered that the company is a holding company and owns all the ordinary shares of Bryant and May Limited and the entire issued capital of Bryant and May (Brazil) Limited, and all the shares of J. John Masters and Company Limited.

## ANGLO-PERSIAN

In the course of a few weeks the final dividend of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company for 1929 will be announced. For 1928 no interim dividend was declared, but a final dividend of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. For 1929 an interim dividend of 5 per cent. was paid last November, and a substantial final dividend is anticipated, showing a very material increase on the full year's distributions as compared with recent years. In these circumstances, a purchase of Anglo-Persian at the present price should prove a profitable transaction.

Another oil share, on which favourable opinions are being expressed in knowledgeable circles is V.O.C., which also should pay for locking away at the present level.

TAURUS

## COMPANY MEETING

In this issue will be found a report of the meeting of United Kingdom Tobacco (1929).

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## Company Meeting

## UNITED KINGDOM TOBACCO (1929)

## KEEN COMPETITION

## SATISFACTORY INITIAL RESULTS

The First Annual General Meeting of the United Kingdom Tobacco Company (1929), Ltd., was held on May 19 at Winchester House, E.C.

Mr. Arthur Donn (the chairman) said that the company had acquired the business of the old United Kingdom Tobacco Company and Marcovitch and Co., with their valuable subsidiaries. Those companies were the proprietors of numerous well-known brands of cigarettes, including Greys, Sarony, Black and White, Muratti and Bandmaster. The present company was incorporated on 10th January, 1929, when the present directorate took over the management. It would be futile to deny that the task of taking over the reins was extremely difficult, and it had taken the directors many months before they could feel they had obtained a thorough grip of the business. The first year of any business was almost invariably extremely difficult, and general commercial conditions during 1929 had naturally not made the task any easier. However, taking into account all the circumstances, he thought that their first year had been not at all unsatisfactory, showing, as it did, a considerable improvement on the results of the previous year 1928 under the old management.

## GIFT SCHEMES

Like all the leading manufacturers of cigarettes, they had been compelled to enter into the field of gift schemes. For some time there had been an ever-growing public demand for cigarettes with free coupons in every packet, which coupons could be exchanged for gifts varying in value according to the number of coupons returned to the manufacturers. Competition was fierce in every branch of the business, but in no section was it as fierce as it was in that free coupon business. They had spent considerable time and money in creating and developing a brand of cigarettes—namely, Bandmaster—in the field. Everything pointed to the success of that policy and the sales of that new line were very gratifying.

They had written off entirely the preliminary and formation expenses account of £7,821. They were able to do that by allotting the value of sundry assets acquired from the vendors which were not valued in the apportionment of the purchase price, the profits earned prior to incorporation and £949 taken from profits earned during 1929. In the profit and loss account there remained a surplus of £15,027, which it was proposed to carry forward.

With regard to the acquisition of 315,000 of the 600,000 Ordinary shares of the company by Godfrey Phillips, Ltd., events had proved that that was a move in the right direction. Although he was not enamoured of the word "rationalisation," he was convinced it was a necessity among the independent concerns owing to severe competition from the combine. They had been able to effect many economies already and to avoid a capital expenditure of £100,000 on a new factory. The measure for centralising factories would come into operation during the current year; so the full benefits were still to come.

The report and accounts were adopted.

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